

### New U.N. coordinator on Iraq replaces Halliday

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. chief has named a German official with the U.N. Development Programme in Geneva as the new humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, a spokesman said. Hans von Sponeck replaces Dennis J. Halliday, who announced in July that he was leaving his post at the end of September after criticising U.N. sanctions and pushing to get more aid for Iraq. Von Sponeck will take over the distribution network of the U.N. oil-for-food programme, which allows Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil to buy food, medicine and other humanitarian goods, said spokesman Fred Eckhardt. Iraq has been barred from selling oil on the open market since U.N. sanctions were imposed following Baghdad's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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## Netanyahu claims breakthrough at White House summit with Arafat

### Albright in Middle East soon, Arafat and Netanyahu in Washington next month

Agencies

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday that he and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat had achieved a breakthrough on a long-elusive deal to turn over more West Bank territory, and President Bill Clinton asked them to return next month to iron out a final deal.

"I believe that we all agreed that we have made progress on the path to peace," Clinton told reporters after an hour-long session with the two leaders in the Oval Office.

He described "a significant narrowing of the gaps between the two parties across a wide range of issues."

But Secretary of State Madeleine Albright steered clear of claiming a breakthrough on any of the tough issues, including how much land Israel would relinquish and what the Palestinians would do to curb terrorism.

"This process needs to be speeded up," Albright said.

She and U.S. mediator Dennis Ross will go to the Middle East for more talks with the two leaders around Oct. 6, and about a week later Arafat and Netanyahu will return to the White House to see Clinton again.

Clinton convened a hastily arranged summit at the White House Monday in a bid to get the deadlocked peace talks back on track.

But U.S. administration officials held little hope for any immediate results.

Arafat and Netanyahu were called together here after talks with Albright Sunday in New York signalled some progress on breaking their 18-month stalemate.

The White House demanded earlier that the two leaders end their impasse when they meet with Clinton.

"This is really time to bring



U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, center, smiles as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat shake hands Monday after the three met in New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel (AP photo)

### Arafat U.N. speech postponed

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat postponed his speech before the General Assembly on Monday to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the U.S. president in a hastily called Washington summit.

Arafat was scheduled to return later Monday to deliver the speech, at which he originally pledged to state his intention of declaring an independent Palestinian state next year whether or not a final peace agreement with Israel is in place.

But U.S. diplomatic sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Arafat had promised to tone down the speech — a move which improved the atmosphere for peace-making and allowed the Washington summit to come about.

His speech before the General Assembly has particular significance. Never before has Arafat — or any other Palestinian — addressed the audience from the podium during the regular debate. The Palestinian observer mission was granted that right earlier this summer.

Arafat had been expected to address the morning session, but his appearance was postponed to allow him to travel to Washington to meet with Netanyahu and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met with Arafat and Netanyahu in New York over the weekend, and has said she hoped Arafat would not use the occasion of his U.N. speech to again declare his intention of setting up a Palestinian state.

loudly about the deadlock over areas for the proposed Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank and Palestinian security guarantees to Israel.

Michael McCurry, Washington has been reluctant to intervene in the failing talks and has complained

But McCurry said Clinton saw fit to step in at this juncture to push the parties toward an agreement.

"As always in a Middle East peace process, a meeting with the president of the United States of America locks in certain details, generates some commitments and builds on momentum," said McCurry, who was quick to lower expectations.

"I expect today only that they will make some commitments on the future course of this dialogue with the goal of building on the momentum they generated over the weekend," he said without elaborating on what progress was made.

McCurry would not say whether Clinton will press Arafat to soften his words on the establishment of a new Palestine.

Clinton in January proposed that Israel conduct a 13-per cent withdrawal from the West Bank in exchange for Palestinian commitments to fight anti-Israeli violence.

Arafat has accepted the proposal but Netanyahu has agreed to a 10 per cent handover of territory along with an additional three per cent to be designated a "nature preserve."

Both sides, however, are also still far apart on how to divide up the territory and which areas will be under total Palestinian control. Washington can thus only hope to cement those areas where agreement has been reached and detail next steps for concluding a deal on the outstanding issues.

The White House is eager to announce at least some progress to demonstrate Clinton's international leadership in the face of possible impeachment hearings into his affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky.



Israeli riot police drag away an Israeli Arab who is bleeding from his face as they quell riots for the second day running in Umm Al Fahem (Reuters photo)

## Clashes continue in Umm Al Fahem

By Alia A. Toukan and agencies

AMMAN — The Israeli embassy in Amman Monday conveyed to its government Jordan's protest of Israel's handling of the recent flare-up between 'Israeli Arabs' and police over land slated for confiscation, as clashes continued for the second day, sources said yesterday.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Mordechai summoned Israel's ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran, late Sunday to convey Amman's apprehension over the violence in the Arab town of Umm Al Fahem, official sources told the Jordan Times Monday.

News agencies reported over 100 injuries, and more than 20 arrests, while Israel's Jerusalem Post reported Monday as many as 400 casualties.

Tarawneh told Eran that Israel must halt confiscation of land from its rightful owners, release those arrested, and reach a swift solution to the problem, Minister of Information Nasser Judeh said.

The clashes began Sunday when Israeli police moved in to tear down a tent erected by 'Israeli Arabs' three weeks ago to protest the confiscation of their land, which Israel intends to use for military training ground purposes.

News agency reports said as many as 800 policemen and border policemen used tear gas and fired live ammunition

and rubber-coated bullets at the protesters. The mayor of Umm Al Fahem and leader of the Arab Israeli Islamic Movement, Raid Salah, was among the 76 people hospitalized.

Israeli authorities say an agreement was reached with the residents of the town to nationalise about 50 hectares of land, in

and several others arrested, according to news agencies.

Leaders of the 'Arab-Israeli' community called for a general nation-wide strike today.

According to the Jerusalem Post, Israeli defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, backed a plan Sunday to allow the land to be used through December, while negotiations between the two sides take place until a solution is reached.

The violence was described in the Israeli press Monday as resembling the 1987-1993 Intifada (uprising) by the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

'Israeli Arabs', who constitute about 20 per cent of Israel's population, repeatedly complain of state confiscation of their land and 'racist' practices by the Jewish state.

Jordan has maintained contact with the 'Israeli Arabs' since it signed its 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Jordanians have been angered over the 20-month-old standoff on the Palestinian-Israeli track, and reports of continued mistreatment of Palestinians by the Israeli authorities.

Tarawneh clinched an overwhelming vote of confidence in the Lower House of Parliament last Thursday, but 53 of the 80 deputies called for a halt to normalisation with the Jewish state.

### Israel's embassy delivers Jordan's protest

exchange for approximately six times as much land elsewhere. The authorities say police were sent in to evict the protesters after efforts to persuade them to leave on their own had failed.

Amid a strike by the residents of Umm Al Fahem yesterday to protest Sunday's incidents, violence erupted after Israel deployed riot police at the outskirts of the town, and used baton charges and tear gas to disperse stone-throwing demonstrators.

Several 'Israeli Arabs' were wounded Monday

## Iraq says French, Swiss nerve gas tests contradict U.S. claims

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq on Monday said French and Swiss laboratory tests on Iraqi warhead fragments prove that it never equipped its missiles with deadly VX nerve gas.

The results of the analyses by French and Swiss laboratories, overseen by 14 experts, contradict the results of the American laboratory and show that there is no VX on missile fragments," state radio said.

"These results, which have angered the Americans, show that Iraq was telling the truth," the radio said.

Fourteen international experts ended two days of discussions Friday on the

laboratory tests, although no statement was issued.

The final results are not yet public, but none of the Swiss tests, nor initial findings by the French laboratory showed any trace of VX nerve gas, contrary to an analysis by a U.S. army lab which also found traces of the biological weapon anthrax.

Western diplomats said that the final results of the French tests were expected to be negative regarding VX.

They added that the technicians may decide to call for new tests on the samples sent to the U.S. laboratory to double check the findings.

Butler ordered the addi-

tional tests by France and Switzerland after Iraq protested the results of the U.S. analysis in July, which showed that the lethal chemical agent was present in 11 of 44 samples.

The U.S. tests contradicted Iraqi assertions that Baghdad had never succeeded in filling its Al Hussein missile warheads with VX.

The oil embargo, the harshest of U.N. sanctions imposed for Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, cannot be lifted until U.N. weapons inspectors certify that Iraq no longer has weapons of mass destruction or long range missiles.

### \$7.6m earmarked for Wadi Rum National Park

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and the Aqaba Regional Authority recently signed an agreement to create a \$7.6 million Wadi Rum National Park, designed with the area's fragile eco-system in mind, said the signatories.

Society Director General Khaled Irani said the 540-square-kilometre project, which is funded by the World Bank, will allow the society to manage Wadi Rum as a protected area for the next three years.

"Wadi Rum will be protected because it has a unique landscape and a fragile desert ecosystem," Irani told the Jordan Times. "Creating a national park in the wadi will organise the use of the area."

He added that the national park is intended mainly as an attraction for tourists.

The director general said a regulatory mechanism and a comprehensive management plan will be set up taking into consideration tourism, range land sustainable development and conservation.

"Our role is to cooperate with the local people to organise tourism there and protect this threatened area," said Irani.

He added that a survey will be conducted soon to study the wadi's flora, fauna and cultural aspects, using available data at the Ministry of Tourism and the Department of Antiquities.

A visitor's centre will be constructed with the authority's help to explain the "uniqueness" of the site, organise tourists and provide them with information.

Irani said a "project steering committee," which included three residents of Wadi Rum has been established recently to put together management regulations.

"Developing a communication mechanism with the local people will be the project's first priority," stressing the need to establish a form of partnership between the management and locals.

According to the project's technical study, in order to protect the area, regulations will be set up to organise some of the locals' activities such as grazing. "Socio-economic activities and small income generation projects will be established as alternatives for those who might be affected by the regulations," Irani said.

He added that some species

such as the Arabian oryx could be reintroduced to Wadi Rum, which "will add another perspective to the area."

In 1978, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the World Wildlife Fund contributed four oryx brought from the San Diego Animal Park to the non-governmental society which runs six major nature reserves covering 1,000-square kilometres and plans to set up seven more.

By 1997, the 22-square-kilometre Shumari Wildlife Reserve, now home to 300 Arabian oryx and a breeding centre for threatened wild animals and plants, boosted the four animals to a healthy population of 200. Thirteen of them were released into the wild in 1983.

Aqaba Regional Authority Secretary General Akel Abu

Tayeh said the project aims at improving Wadi Rum village socially and economically, protecting the area's flora and fauna and promoting eco-tourism.

"The society's good record in Dana Nature Reserve and other areas, qualifies it to manage the wadi," Abu Tayeh said.

He added that the project is part of a \$44 million scheme, funded by the World Bank, to develop Aqaba, Petra and Wadi Rum. In addition to the society, the plan involves the ministries of tourism, municipal and rural affairs and the environment, finance and interior.

In the seventies the society, established in 1966 under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein, conducted a study which revealed that Wadi Rum is one of the areas that should be protected.

Jackie Chan says complete of stereotyping

TAIPEI (AP) — The motion picture star Jackie Chan has finally become a role model for Chinese people in Hollywood. His films are too often seen as a series of stunts or kills. Chan, 35, is a special case. He is a martial arts star who has made a career of playing a cop or a killer. Chan's latest film, "The Matrix," is a Hollywood production. Chan is a Hong Kong actor who has become a household name in the West. He is known for his stunts and his ability to play a variety of roles. He is a role model for Chinese people in Hollywood.

Carling: 'I did love Princess Diana'

LONDON (R) — England's rugby captain, Clive Woodward, said he had a crush on Princess Diana. Woodward, 35, is a former international rugby player who has been captain of the England national team since 1995. He is a former international rugby player who has been captain of the England national team since 1995. He is a former international rugby player who has been captain of the England national team since 1995.

A prince by any other name

WASHINGTON — The prince of Wales, Charles, is expected to visit the United States next month. The prince is expected to visit the United States next month. The prince is expected to visit the United States next month. The prince is expected to visit the United States next month. The prince is expected to visit the United States next month.

McCartney becomes a chauffeur for a day

LONDON (R) — The Beatles' Paul McCartney is expected to become a chauffeur for a day. McCartney is expected to become a chauffeur for a day. McCartney is expected to become a chauffeur for a day. McCartney is expected to become a chauffeur for a day. McCartney is expected to become a chauffeur for a day.

Girls still out on chase

PITTSBURGH (R) — The girls are still out on the chase. The girls are still out on the chase. The girls are still out on the chase. The girls are still out on the chase. The girls are still out on the chase.



## Israel played role in U.N. weapons check in Iraq, inspector says

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — U.N. arms inspectors were given key information by Israel, starting in 1994, about how Iraq conceals its weapons programmes, a former inspector said in an interview Monday.

The inspector, Scott Ritter, quit his job as a member of the U.N. Special Commission last month, saying the United States and Britain

systematically undermined efforts to get to the bottom of Iraq's arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

"I can honestly say if it weren't for Israel, the Special Commission would not have been able to carry out the anti-concealment effort," Ritter told the Haaretz daily, adding that he has visited Israel several times in recent years.

"The U.S. treated conceal-

ment more as an academic exercise, and I thought Israel treated it as it is — a matter of life and death," Ritter said.

Ritter said he was unable to obtain concealment information from the Central Intelligence Agency or other U.S. offices.

A week after leaving his post, Ritter testified before Congress that the Clinton administration deliberately

blocked UNSCOM's efforts in order to avoid confrontation with Iraq. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright denies the charge.

Ritter said that Iraq would be able to reconstitute its biological and chemical weapons capability and deliver a weapon of mass destruction within six months of the end of U.N. weapons inspections.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Court overturns Egyptian's death sentence

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 28-year-old Egyptian sentenced to death in February after being convicted of premeditated murder walked out of the Criminal Court on Monday as a free man. Mabrouk Mire, 28, was found guilty along with a second Egyptian national, Nadi Ali, 32, of the premeditated murder of Subhi Dakhel, 40, also an Egyptian national, at a stone mill in the Ras Munif area in Ajloun on May 2, 1997. Both were sentenced to death. On June 5, the Court of Cassation returned the case to the Criminal Court ratifying Ali's death sentence, but overturning Mire's sentence, and asked the Criminal Court for a retrial and a re-evaluation of the evidence used against Mire. According to court documents, the two defendants plotted to rob and kill Dakhel because they were suffering financial problems. On Monday, the tribunal, presided over by Judge Ahmad Khatib and including Sami Karaki and Ibrahim Ali, found Mire innocent "for lack of evidence."

#### Islamic Jihad leader released

GAZA CITY (AP) — The leader of the Palestinian Islamic group Jihad has been released from a Palestinian jail after six weeks. Abdullah Shami said Monday he was held for writing an article in which he criticised Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority. The article appeared in the Gaza City weekly Al Istiqlal. Shami was released Sunday. He said he was treated well in prison.

#### Israel predicts no change in German policy

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's government and opposition welcomed Monday the election of Gerhard Schröder as German chancellor, the former confidant he will pursue Germany's pro-Israel policies and the latter hoping for "more sensitivity" over the stalled peace process. Israel's ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, said Schröder's Social Democratic Party would be supportive of Israel like his veteran Christian Democrat predecessor, Helmut Kohl. The opposition Labour Party however held out hope that their social democratic colleagues in Germany will play a more active role in trying to promote the peace process which has stalled under the nationalist regime of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

#### Sudan mobilises citizens to fight in south

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan has declared a general mobilisation and has called up retired army officers to counter expected assaults by southern rebel forces, a state-run newspaper reported Monday. Al Anba daily said Sudan was under threat from the rebels and two neighbouring states "aided by the United States." The government has been warring for several days that it expects a major battle with the rebels for the provincial capital of Juba in southern Equatoria state. There also have been reports of shelling along the Sudanese border with Eritrea. Al Anba said the Sudanese cabinet adopted the mobilisation decision in a meeting Sunday night to counter "Ugandan aggression against the southern region and an Eritrean offensive in the east."

#### 'Ben Laden has no network in Sudan'

DUBAI (AFP) — Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir on Monday said Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden never created a network in Sudan in the five years that he lived there. "Ben Laden came to Sudan after the Afghan war and invested in the road network, airports and agriculture," the president said in an interview with the Arab weekly Al Wasat. "Ben Laden has no partisans or network in Sudan, except for a small group of assistants who have always stayed far away from the media. But America has made him into an ogre it sees everywhere, even after he left Sudan," the president said.

## Hizbollah calls on SLA members to defect

BEIRUT (AP) — Hizbollah on Monday renewed its pledge to protect Israeli-allied Lebanese militiamen who surrender and produced a defection to urge his former comrades to do so.

The appeal by the Shiite Muslim guerrilla group was aimed at the 2,500-member South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia, which is armed and paid by Israel to help patrol the "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Israel set up the zone in 1985 to protect against cross-border guerrilla raids. It is maintained by the SLA and Israeli troops.

Hizbollah's latest offer came at a news conference in a southern suburb of Beirut at which Abbas Hussein Raslan, 28, told reporters he defected in February after serving as an SLA intelligence agent for six years.

It was not clear why Hizbollah waited so long to announce the defection of Raslan, a Shiite

Muslim from the border village of Taibeh.

Raslan said he was paid \$600 a month to provide intelligence from four villages. He described morale in the SLA as "low" and urged militiamen to defect.

"It's a national duty for me and for every Lebanese to join in the resistance against Israeli occupation," he told The Associated Press after the news conference.

The Hizbollah's Sheikh Atallah Ibrahim, who introduced Raslan, read a prepared statement saying that the guerrilla group "again calls on the agents to defect before it is too late and return to their homeland and parents and not to remain cheap tools in the hands of the Zionists." He repeated Hizbollah's pledge to ensure the safety of any defectors.

## Call for voters to register for Qatar's elections

DOHA (AFP) — Qatar called on its citizens Monday to register to vote in the country's first municipality elections.

Voters will be able to register from October 3 and the elections are expected to take place February 20. Women are allowed to take part both as voters and candidates.

The interior ministry has called on all Qataris over the age of 18 with a clean legal record to register, although the military and police will not be allowed to participate.

The emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, issued a law in July calling for the formation of a 29-member council representing all of the emirate's municipalities to be directly elected for a four-year term.

Qatar has a population of 522,000, according to a 1997 census.

## AI issues statement against violence by armed groups in Egypt

AMMAN (J.T.) — Following is a press release issued by Amnesty International's International Secretariat based in London:

HUNDREDS HAVE lost their lives in Egypt as Islamist groups use violence against civilians as a means of achieving their political objectives while the security forces have resorted to "brutal" methods in the name of fighting "terrorism."

Amnesty International said in a new report yesterday. The human rights organisation released its report yesterday to expose the gross human rights abuses perpetrated by armed groups, particularly Al Gama'a Al Islamiyyah and Al Jihad, which have left at least 1,300 people dead since the beginning of 1992.

While political violence has diminished considerably over the past eight months — with Al Gama'a's issuing statements highlighting its willingness to stop all acts of violence — Amnesty International remains seriously concerned that these statements have not specifically addressed the issue of killing civilians.

"It is imperative that Al Gama'a Al Islamiyyah and Al Jihad both state publicly — and unequivocally — that they will never kill civilians again. Only then may there be some hope that past atrocities will not be repeated," Amnesty International said.

The human rights organisation is also reminding the Egyptian government of its responsibility in protecting all civilians.

"The government should take seriously its responsibility of protecting the lives of civilians but this should be done within the rule of law," Amnesty International said.

"Respect for human rights is an essential prerequisite for ending a climate of violence which has plagued the security forces against armed Islamist groups."

Al Jihad, whose activities are concentrated mainly in the capital, has targeted senior government and military officials, including the three attempted assassinations of three ministers in 1993. Al Gama'a, active mainly in Upper Egypt, has targeted Coptic Christians, tourists, policemen and officers from the State Security Investi-

gations Department.

Al Gama'a has been responsible for grave human rights abuses of concern to Amnesty International in the country in recent years. Hundreds of civilians have been deliberately killed because of their actual or supposed religious beliefs or nationalities.

Recognising the importance of tourism to the Egyptian economy, Al Gama'a has waged a five-year war against tourists and the tourism industry. Members of Al Gama'a ambushed and attacked buses, Nile cruise boats and passenger trains carrying foreign tourists and urged foreign tourists not to travel to Egypt.

The deadliest massacre of civilians that Egypt witnessed in recent years took place on November 17, 1997, in which 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians were killed in an armed attack at a historical site near Luxor. The six gunmen who carried out the attack were later killed by the security forces following a shoot-out.

Scores of Coptic Christians have also been deliberately and arbitrarily killed by members of Al Gama'a. Most of the

killings took place between May 1992 and the end of 1997 in Minya, Assiut and Qena governorates, all in Upper Egypt. Those killed were reportedly targeted because of their religion.

The most recent massacre of Coptic Christians took place on February 12, 1997 when, in the early evening in the town of Abu Qergas near Minya in Upper Egypt, five armed and masked men, believed to be members of Al Gama'a, burst into St. George's church and opened fire at 30 Coptic Christians who were attending a weekly religious gathering. Nine people died instantly.

Al Gama'a and Al Jihad have both targeted writers, journalists, university professors, judges and other public figures who have openly condemned the two armed groups. The groups said they considered them to be "atheists" or accused them of supporting the government. For example Al Gama'a claimed responsibility for the attempted assassination on October 14, 1994 of Nagib Mahfouz, Egypt's best known writer and the 1988 Nobel Prize winner for literature.

"While Al Gama'a Al Islamiyyah and Al Jihad have committed extensive acts of violence, the Egyptian government has also meted out severe punishments in its fight against terrorism" which have contributed to a climate conducive to human rights abuses," Amnesty International alleged.

There have been mass arrests of suspected members of or sympathisers with Al Gama'a and Al Jihad. Many continue to be held without charge or trial in administrative detention, or since the end of 1992, were tried before military courts whose procedures fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Torture has been used systematically against Islamist detainees.

"It is time the government understands that human rights violations as a response to human rights abuses are only exacerbating a seemingly endless cycle of violence," Amnesty International said.

The organisation is also calling on all armed groups in the country to respect minimum human rights and humanitarian standards, and specifically the right to life.



RAFSANJANI'S DAUGHTER ON TRIAL: Faezeh Hashemi, daughter of former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, appears Monday before a Tehran court. Hashemi, an MP and moderate feminist activist, is accused of publishing 'lies' in her newspaper Zan (Women), after it accused General Mohammad Nagdi, commander of the intelligence unit of the police forces, of having links with Islamist extremist groups waging a violent campaign against moderates and leftists (AFP photo)

## More explosions in south Yemen

ADEN (AFP) — Grenade attacks in two southern Yemen towns over the weekend injured no one but two people have been arrested, security services officials said Monday.

One attack came at dawn on Sunday in Zinjibar, to the north of Aden, in a road where both the ruling party and the Islamic opposition's offices are located.

Another grenade attack took place Saturday night in the main road through Jaar, also north of Aden, the source said, adding that two people had been arrested following the attacks.

Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, has been hit by a wave of unrest since the government raised the price of fuel and some foodstuffs earlier this year.

The government has blamed the attacks on the opposition in exile. Police last month announced the arrest of a network of 22 Yemenis working for undisclosed "foreign parties."

According to official figures, 34 people have been killed and 102 wounded in the unrest. Press reports put the figures at 52 dead and more than 200 injured.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

#### PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 .....Cartoon — The Pink Panther  
15:30 Small Talk — "Quiz Show"  
16:00 .....Drama — Neighbours  
16:30 .....Doc. — Life Choices  
17:00 .....Doc. — Royal Blood  
18:00 .....French Programmes — Les Coeurs Brûlés  
19:00 .....Le Journal  
19:15 .....French Programme — Fractales  
19:30 .....News headlines  
19:35 Step by Step — "We Are Going to Disney World"  
20:00 .....What Would You Do?  
20:30 .....Encounter  
21:10 Mini-series — The Ambassador (Ep.2)  
22:00 .....News in English  
22:30 .....Lonesome Dove  
23:59 .....Feature film — Wounded  
01:30 .....End of T.X.

#### PRAYER TIMES

04:06 .....Fajr  
05:23 .....Sunrise/Duha  
11:26 .....Dhuhr  
14:51 .....Asr  
17:29 .....Maghreb  
18:46 .....Isha

#### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel.  
4632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

#### Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

#### Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4634811

#### St. Aftem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel.

4771751

#### Amman International Church Tel.

5855897

#### German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel.

5688404

#### The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel.

5811295

#### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel.

4654932

#### St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel.

5661757

#### Church of the Annunciation Tel.

4637440

#### Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

#### Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel.

5920146

#### The Uniate Catholic Church Tel.

4624757

#### The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel.

4614190

#### Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

#### The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

#### The Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

4771331

#### The American Orthodox Church Tel.

4775261

#### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

#### Relative hot weather conditions

will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. Temperatures are expected to gradually dip effective Wednesday. In Aqaba, it will be relatively hot, winds northerly moderate, and sea calm.

#### Amman

18/31

Aqaba 22/35

Deserts 17/34

Jordan Valley 22/36

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 31, Aqaba 34 Humidity readings: Amman 28 per cent.

Aqaba 52 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 27

Jerash 34

Um Qays 32

Madaba 32

Petra 34

Dead Sea 38

#### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Nidal Dahleh 5837195

Dr. Sa'ad Tarfawi 4788285

Dr. Hanna Mansour 4750197

#### Dr. Ali Shukri 4898863

Al Asema pharmacy 4637055

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660

Nairoozhi pharmacy 4623672

#### IRBID:

Dr. Lutfi Shalabi 341798

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

#### ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Saffarini 987565

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

#### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341

Rescue Police 192 4621111

4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Traffic Police 4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Hotel Complaints 5605800

Price Complaints 5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

#### Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. 4636381

RJ Flight Information 44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

#### HOSPITALS

##### AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic, Abdli 5661317

Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 5856856

Luzmila 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6

Akileh Maternity 4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Malhas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071

Shmeisani Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279

Al-Ahli, Abdli 5664164/6

Indian, Al-Muhajireen 4777101/3

Al-Bashir 4775111/26

Army, Marka 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 5602340/50

Arad Hospital 5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

#### ZARQA National Hospital

(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hilma Modern Hospital (09)990999

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

#### FOR THE TRAV



## Princess Basma urges increased women's role in development

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday invited all Jordanians and local institutions to contribute to comprehensive development in view of the difficult circumstances the country is currently facing.

"We all are in need of the participation of various economic and social sectors, including individuals, institutions and others, to enhance the role of Jordanian women in development," the Princess said at the opening of a two-day workshop on "the concept of social gender and its relation to rural development."

Princess Basma urged departments and institutions to follow the example of the Ministry of Agriculture and help Jordanian women play a humanitarian role in serving

their communities.

"We are looking forward to a new era in comprehensive development, which can only be attained through the involvement of women in various sectors, especially in the agricultural sector," she added.

In his address to the workshop, which was held at the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer, Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha said sustainable development requires the participation of all members of the community, particularly women, whom he said should act on an equal footing with men.

The minister added that it is not possible to achieve sustainable development at the social, political or economic

levels without women's involvement.

Khreisha said the ministry is looking to improve the quality of life of rural residents through programmes exposing farmers to modern agricultural techniques.

The ministry has been restructuring to include new units that give attention to development issues, agricultural extension services and rural development, he added.

Khreisha presented Princess Basma with a Ministry of Agriculture award in recognition of her role in promoting socio-economic development in Jordan.

Participants at the meeting are reviewing working papers dealing with rural development and the role of women in rural communities.

## UNRWA chief Hansen to seek contributions from donor countries

By Ghaila Alul

AMMAN — With his agency running in the red for the past two years, Peter Hansen, commissioner general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, will meet with donor nations today to try to convince them to increase their contributions to the agency, suffering from a \$62 million deficit in this year's \$314 million budget.

Hansen, who arrived in Amman last week, Monday reviewed UNRWA's draft annual report with its Advisory Council on the services offered by the agency in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He told the Jordan Times that the annual report, to be submitted to the U.N. General Assembly later this year, covers the financial difficulties encountered by the agency over the last few years and the importance of the continued role of UNRWA as a major provider of educational, health and social services to some 3.2 million Palestinian refugees.

The cash-strapped UNRWA has long tried to enlarge its donor base and increase its

contributions, especially from Arab countries, to prevent any further cost reduction measures and budget deficits.

Addressing Monday's meeting, As'ad Abdul Rahman, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, urged donor states to shoulder their responsibilities toward UNRWA and increase their contributions to cover the basic needs of the growing number of Palestinian refugees in all the agency's fields of operation.

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Palestinian National Authority are doing everything in their power to urge and encourage more contributions and new donors, particularly from Arab states, who should assist but must not be held, even financially, responsible for the refugees," Abdul Rahman said.

"Extra contributions are required, not only to bridge this financial gap, but also to expand and improve services, particularly health and education, which through the current reductions are suffering to the extent that this will adversely affect the future of our people," he said.

He said the PNA and the PLO have contributed about

\$5 million for 1998 in cash, and a similar amount in-kind (services) from the relevant Palestinian ministries for the improvement of living conditions in camps.

Abdul Rahman also said the PLO plans to work with the United States and other donors to assist in winning United Nations' approval on a "serious offer" by Iraq to offer \$50 million annually from its oil revenues to UNRWA's general budget.

"There is a similar offer from Libya, which is worthy of pursuing," he added.

Hansen said, however, that because Iraq and Libya are subject to U.N. sanctions, no transfers could be made without approval from the sanctions committee.

Stressing the need for the agency to continue fulfilling its duties to Palestinian refugees, Ibrahim Badran, director general of the Palestinian Affairs Department, urged the international community and the United Nations to come up with serious suggestions to overcome UNRWA's financial crisis.

Responding to fears among Palestinian refugees that bud-

get and service cuts were steps toward ending the agency's mandate and sending refugees in exile, Hansen said he was "100 per cent confident" that the General Assembly will keep renewing UNRWA's mandate until the refugee problem is resolved.

UNRWA's present mandate is scheduled to end next year.

"The agency's mandate was renewed 16 times, and I am 100 per cent confident that it will be renewed for the 17th time until we come to a solution and an implementation of the refugee problem," Hansen told reporters following the meeting.

In his address to the meeting, Abdul Rahman stressed that the PLO and the PNA "reject any attempts aimed at resetting the refugees outside of Palestine, or Arabising or Palestinianising either UNRWA or the refugee issue."

"Although the PNA and the PLO are willing to cooperate and coordinate with UNRWA and donors, they will not accept any handover of UNRWA's responsibilities from this specialised agency," Hansen said.

During his stay in Amman, Hansen had a long meeting

with staff representatives and convinced them to reverse their decision to stage an open-ended strike planned to push the agency for better working conditions and clearer remuneration.

Emerging from a seven-hour meeting with staff representatives last Wednesday, Hansen proposed forming a 10-member team — five from the agency's staff and five from its administration — to conduct a thorough review of the workers' demands.

During the meeting, Hansen also proposed cost-effective solutions to employees' pressing demands.

UNRWA workers have long protested against UNRWA's failure to meet their demands which include re-examining the salary scale, reducing the early retirement age from 55 to 50, and lowering the minimum period of service required for pensions from 30 to 25 years.

Also on Monday Hansen met with Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and discussed UNRWA's activities in all fields of operation and especially Jordan, which hosts more than 1.2 million refugees.

## Explosives experts testify in trial of 13 accused of subversive acts

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Explosives experts testifying at the trial of 10 people accused of plotting subversive acts Monday told the State Security Court that the substances used in explosions at a kindergarten and a hotel parking lot were manufactured locally.

The 10 defendants are part of a group of 13 accused of possessing, transporting and manufacturing explosives with illicit intent, carrying out extremist attacks and belonging to an illegal organisation.

Three people, who also face the same charges, are being tried in absentia.

Captain Odeh F. 30, and

First Lieutenant Salem A., both chemical experts at the Public Security Department's Criminal Labs, testified that the substances they extracted from the explosion sites "were handmade, highly explosive substances."

In May of this year, a series of explosions rocked the parking lot of the Jerusalem Hotel and the Modern American School kindergarten building. During the same period, two vehicles belonging to former officials were set ablaze.

Three months later, 10 of the 13 suspects were arrested.

According to the prosecution charge sheet, some group members met in 1994 and started attending religious lessons

in their homes and decided to form a group they called "Reform and Challenge to change the reality in Jordan."

In February 1998, the group decided to launch terrorist attacks against government, security and some individuals' properties in addition to entertainment venues, and bought material which they allegedly used to manufacture explosives.

Last week, all 10 defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges against them.

The military tribunal, comprised Judges Yousef Faouri, Tayel Raqad and Ahmad Ayash, adjourned the case until Sept. 30 to hear more prosecution witnesses.

## World's possible shortest man finds living a normal life no tall order

By Munther Murjan

AMMAN — Jordanian Younis Edwan, who stands at 65 centimetres, appears set to become the world's shortest living man, replacing India's now deceased 50-centimetre tall Gul Mohammad.

In a recent letter to the Jordan Times, the Guinness Book of Records said Edwan, 27, could be the new title holder after the demise of Mohammad.

"Being this short is a distinction that would make anyone proud," he said when asked about becoming the world's shortest living man.

Edwan said his stature, a result of stunted bone growth after his mother accidentally took contraceptives during her pregnancy, never hindered his desire to lead a normal life and to find a suitable and "understanding" wife.

"I love going out to places and seeing things," he said in an interview at his modest family home in Shafa Badran, near Amman.

But this has not been an easy task in a society that does not always show sensitivity and tolerance toward its physically challenged members.

"In Jordan, nobody seems to care for people with problems [handicaps]. They have no tolerance or understanding towards people with difficulties or those who are different than them," he said.

"On many occasions, pregnant women ran away from the sidewalk I was using in order not to see me for fear her child might turn out like me," he said.

"In addition, there are no special centres for social gatherings, and when special services are available, they are too expensive and out of the reach of most."

Edwan, the sixth member in a family of seven sisters and brothers, recalled some incidents where several people

offended or mocked him.

"I was transferring ownership of a piece of land to my brother when an official at the Land and Survey Department asked me to bring my 'legal guardian'," he said, sitting in a new electric wheelchair he purchased for JD5,500 after an injury to his leg impaired his mobility.

"Later, they asked me to get an official certificate attesting to my mental health. I was furious, but I decided to meet their demands to get my work done," he explained.

"After telling doctors what the officials asked me to do, they laughed and offered to carry out tests to determine their mental situation."

Edwan said it took him a while before he managed to convince his family, to respect his sense of independence and his yearning for personal space.

"Once, I stayed out for two days and when I came back I had an argument with my parents, who said that unlike my brothers I cannot take care of myself," he recalled.

"I told them that I can and that was it. Nobody ever questioned me for being late."

Edwan said he spent the best years of his life at school.

"There it was easy. I did not have to move from my class, the teacher came to class, and I had help from my friends who were friendly and cooperative," he said.

However, he decided to shelve his childhood dream to earn an undergraduate degree in philosophy because he feared he would not be able to manage easily at university.

"There, things would be different as I would be on my own, movement inside the university would be difficult and the people over there are not going to be as friendly as my friends at school," he explained.

Edwan said his imminent



Younis Edwan, 27, is measured Monday by his brother Abu Ahmad at his home in Amman (Reuters photo)

desire was to get married and have a family.

"I am not a dwarf... If I have children, they would be of normal height as doctors, who carried out tests on me, have assured me," he said.

"But they have advised me against getting married to a dwarf woman [from Karak] because it would increase chances of having dwarf children," he added.

He said he was once engaged "to a woman of normal height" from Egypt, but the relationship did not last long.

"I still hope to get married soon."

Edwan decided to start his own business by opening a grocery adjacent to the family house.

"Though it was interesting, I also felt it was demanding and

restricting and I decided to lease the store in exchange for a fixed retainer that I receive annually."

To many of his school friends, Edwan became a symbol of confidence.

"His free spirit, outgoing personality and love for life are his main characteristics," said Mamoun Keswani, one of his schoolmates.

"Despite his apparent handicap, he managed to overcome obstacles and challenge life on a daily basis."

The Guinness Book of Records said in the letter received by the Jordan Times earlier this month it could not officially accept Edwan as the shortest living man unless certain guidelines were met, such as measuring him three times during a given day.

## Biltaji discusses tourism promotion with French, U.S. envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism Akel Biltaji Monday met with French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Emié to discuss prospects of French assistance in establishing a museum in the Greco-Roman city of Jerash and expanding the sound and light panorama at the archaeological site.

Biltaji and Emié also discussed the prospect of France helping the ministry in the classification of hotels under internationally recognised criteria and the ministry's projected media campaign in France to help promote Jordan's tourist and archaeological sites.

The two sides covered arrangements for Biltaji's visit to France from Oct. 8-12, during which he will meet with France's tourism director and other officials responsible for promoting tourism to discuss a joint Jordanian-French cooperation programme.

Also Monday, Biltaji and U.S. Ambassador to Jordan William Burns discussed technical and financial assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development to Jordan's tourism sector as well as projects by the American Centre for Oriental Research and the American-sponsored archaeological digs at Hisban and Tel Omair.

Burns expressed his country's readiness to provide assistance to help Jordan carry out its tourism-marketing plans in the U.S. and to back a media campaign.

Biltaji outlined the ministry's plans and programmes to develop the tourism industry.

## what's going on

- FOURTH JORDANIAN CHILDREN'S SONG FESTIVAL**
- \* Seminar on children's preschool songs at the Royal Cultural Centre (10:00 am.-1:00 p.m.)
  - \* Performance of children's songs at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.
- DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '98 FESTIVAL**
- \* "Summer '98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:
  - EXHIBITIONS**
  - \* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sibel Hani at the Main House.
  - \* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
  - \* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
  - \* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'sh at the Museum.
  - LECTURE**
  - \* "La Jordanie" by Marc Lavergne at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, at 6:30 p.m.
  - EXHIBITIONS**
  - \* Works by graduates of the Arts Centre (including ceramics, paintings, and sculpture) at the centre, Mahmoud Irani St. (Tel. 5529619), until Oct. 8.
  - \* Exhibition of caricatures of Arab personalities at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Oct. 30.
  - \* "Jordan-Kuwait Industrial Show '98" at the Amman International Auto Exhibit, Airport Road (Tel. 5690753), until Oct. 2.
  - \* Paintings by Mohammad Poteh entitled "A Time and Colour" at the City Hall, Ras Al 'Ain (Tel. 4743158), until Sept. 30.
  - \* Display of Bani Hamida and Jordan River Designs products (rugs, cushions, wall-hangings, and quilts) at the Jordan River Designs showroom, until Sept. 30 (Tel. 4613081).
  - \* Photography exhibition entitled "Les Ciel d'Artistes a Paris" at the premises of the Association of the Jordanian Plastic Artists, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 30.
  - \* Paintings by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 30.

## Ministry allowing fewer doctors to work abroad

By Lama Sidawi

AMMAN — The Health Ministry is reducing approvals allowing its physicians take unpaid leave for years to work abroad as part of efforts to stem a shortage of doctors in some regions and to improve overall medical services, an official said Sunday.

He said the restrictions were enforced by new Health Minister Nael Ajlouni who, after taking over on Aug. 20, became alarmed by the growing number of leave applications he received from ministry doctors.

"[The decision] does not amount to a total ban," said the official. "The ministry is just trying to fill its need for qualified doctors while helping them take unpaid leaves to enable them to improve their [financial] situation," the official told the Jordan Times.

"When the ministry sees that some specialisations are needed in certain areas of Jordan, it is being strict in granting approvals because it has to take the general interest into consideration," added the ministry official, who asked not to be named.

"However, we are granting approvals to reasonable requests."

"As for those who have

already taken leave and seek to renew the request every year, the ministry is trying to set a date for their return before it gives them an okay."

Health Ministry doctors, who can earn up to JD440 a month, often ask for unpaid leaves for years to take jobs in the better-paid private sector or to work in the Gulf states. They can go back to their ministry posts when they return.

Bassem Dajani, head of the Jordan Medical Association, said he did not see a reason why seats left vacant by doctors on unpaid leave could not be replaced by scores of unemployed doctors who would work under temporary contracts.

"There are a lot of unemployed doctors, and through [temporary] contracts, Dr. Ajlouni could fill these vacancies," he added.

Dajani said the government would not suffer from any financial burdens if it took them on a temporary basis since the Health Ministry is not paying the salaries of those on leave.

But the ministry official said hiring people on contracts would not be an easy process as it involves "complicated bureaucratic measures" that sometimes end after the ministry begins hiring full-timers.

## International book fair opens in Amman on Thursday

By Randa Naffa

AMMAN — The Seventh International Book Fair will open in Amman on Thursday with thousands of books on display from 290 publishing houses in 14 Arab and foreign countries covering 40,000 subjects, organisers said Monday.

Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid said the municipality will be hosting the 10-day event in cooperation with the Jordanian Publishing Union as part of efforts to enrich and strengthen Amman's cultural life.

"In this atmosphere of growing freedoms and democracy, Amman should occupy an active role on the Arab cultural map and should create the appropriate environment to

strengthen creative endeavours," he told a news conference at the city hall.

JPU President Fathi Biss said the display at the municipality's headquarters in the Ras Al Ein district will be the key book event in Jordan and one of the largest in the region.

"The exhibition is a cultural demonstration because it allows interaction between publishers, distributors, readers and library owners in a way that reflects the cultural aspects of Jordan," Biss told the Jordan Times.

Patrons will get a 25 per cent discount on all books, he added.

Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Kuwait, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, India, the United

States and Britain are taking part in the book fair.

Hadid stressed the municipality's role in supporting the establishment of libraries and said he was seriously studying ways to develop Amman's existing 23 public libraries and to open new branches in different governorates.

At the end of the exhibition, prizes and certificates of appreciation will be presented to three Jordanian publishing houses for their contributions to publishing services in the Kingdom. One prize will also be handed to Nasser Al Din Al Assad, former education minister and a renowned Islamic scholar, who has been named by the municipality as the year's "Leading Intellectual."

## Societies participate in clean-up campaign

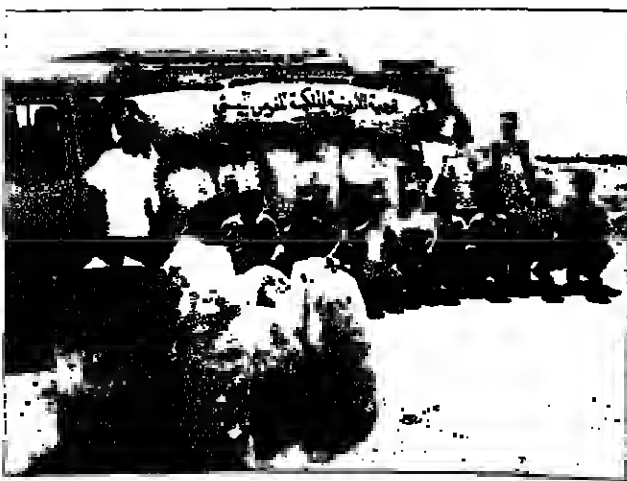
AMMAN (J.T.) — As part of the "Clean Up the World" campaign and in cooperation with the Jordan Environment Society, the Jordan Royal Ecological Diving Society (JREDS) has just finished a beach and coral reef clean-up campaign covering the southern shores and the diving site of Black Rock in Aqaba.

The clean-up campaign is conducted annually by JREDS and is part of JREDS' continuous efforts to play a positive role not only in the promotion of environmental awareness of marine life and related ecosystems, but also in taking a corrective role in helping keep Jordan's underwater heritage free of

man-made litter, a society statement said Monday.

Upon finishing the underwater clean-up activity, Khaled Kurdi, secretary general of JREDS, said: "It is unfortunate that JREDS has to do these clean-ups as they reflect the lack of respect our beachgoers have for the environment. However, they also very much reflect the amount of work needed in order to stop considering the sea as an accessible dumping ground."

The clean-up activity is one of the major responsibilities that JREDS has assumed and is tackling in cooperation with local and international organisations, the statement said. JREDS has also been supported by



Students from the Aqaba region who helped in the clean-up campaign (Photo courtesy of the JES)

the Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) at all levels.

The beach clean-up was helped by the participation

of more than 50 students from Abu Ayoub Al Ansari School and Al Hussein Ben Ali School in Aqaba.



## New era seen for Franco-German ties and Europe with Schroeder

PARIS (AFP) — While Germany's Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder rushed to say Monday that the longstanding Franco-German axis would remain the cornerstone of the European Union, there is little doubt that a new era lies ahead between Paris and Bonn.

"The Franco-German axis is of historic importance and will remain the most important axis for Europe," Schröder said in an interview to French radio the morning after his historic win over outgoing Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Moving to ally France fears that Schröder's Germany would inch closer to Britain, sapping the strength of the historic alliance between Paris and Bonn, the leftwing chancellor-elect pledged "foreign policy continuity ... especially in Franco-German relations."

"My personal relationship with France is much better than the press would have one believe," he said on Europe 1 radio in an apparent reference to comments some months back in which he stated he felt closer to Prime Minister Tony Blair than to Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

"I would like to see Franco-German ties ... widened to affect society. I would like to see Europe as more than a common market, a place where there are the same social and cultural ideas."

The ruling French Socialists see the new relationship as a chance to give Europe a more social turn after a bout of discord between France and Germany. But whether or not the two leftwing governments see eye-to-eye, the link between the two former enemies-turned friends is sure to change.

In Britain, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said Schröder's election victory could indeed enable Britain to play a bigger European role.

"Schröder belongs to a new generation of German leaders, he himself has not been part of the Franco-German axis which has driven Europe throughout its early years," he told the BBC.

"He will be more open to Britain being one of the major leading players within Europe," he added, though insisting this would not sideline France. The French press pointed out however that the 54-year-old chancellor-elect was from a generation relatively unfettered by the guilt of older Germans and could be expected to take office ready to fight for the country's national interests.

"Ties between the two



Germany's newly elected Chancellor Gerhard Schröder smiles as he arrives at the Social Democrat's (SPD) party headquarters. The SPD dealt the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) a crushing defeat in Sunday's general elections (Reuters photo)

countries from now on will have to be viewed through a different perspective," said the conservative daily Le Figaro.

With the two nations now sitting on the same side of the political fence, Jospin Monday expressed hopes that Schröder's team would show more interest "than the former government in problems of growth, employment and Europe's social dimension."

Kohl had countered French demands for a

European policy on employment, seeing it as a national policy domain.

France and Germany also clashed this year over the nomination of the head of the European Central Bank and are divided over EU enlargement to central and eastern European states, with Bonn pressing for swift action while Paris wants institutional reforms first.

Another looming topic of discord remains the EU budget, with Bonn little inclined to continue to pay

the lion's share.

Commenting on Schröder's election victory, Jospin gave a pointer as to how France would hope to see the relationship evolve.

"I imagine that the German vote was possibly also a vote for more solidarity and for a Europe that shows more balance between its economic and social sides."

"We will thus work together well," he concluded.

### Schröder must now form government

BONN, Germany (AP) — Gerhard Schröder, Germany's designated new chancellor, approached the environmental Greens party Monday about joining his Social Democrats in a coalition government after ousting Chancellor Helmut Kohl in a sweeping vote for change.

The Social Democratic victory marked the first time in postwar Germany that voters rejected all parties from the previous government in favour of fresh faces and new ideas.

In a stinging humiliation for the West's longest-serving leader, Kohl and his Christian Democrats won just 35 per cent of the vote, which translates to a loss of 49 of the 294 seats it held in the old parliament.

Now it is up to Schröder — whose Social Democrats won 41 per cent of the vote — to

make good on pledges to end unemployment, stuck above 10 per cent, and to bring long-awaited tax and economic reforms.

With the Greens, a Social Democratic-led government would command a 21-seat majority in the new 669-seat parliament. "I think 21 seats is enough of a majority to form a stable government," Schröder told national ZDF television Monday.

The Social Democrats held informal talks overnight with the Greens, which won 6.7 per cent.

A high-ranking Social Democrat, Wolf-Michael Catenhusen, said Monday the party leadership was expected to start coalition talks with the Greens Friday. Negotiations could be tough between two parties with some sharp policy differences.

## New gene a factor behind Alzheimer's, expert says

COCHIN, India (R) — Research has confirmed suspicions that a new gene could be yet another causative factor that makes people susceptible to Alzheimer's disease, an expert said.

"Work that my group has been involved in confirms earlier suspicions that there is a susceptible gene in chromosome 12 that is a causative factor," Dr. Lindsay Farrer, professor-in-chief of the Genetics Programme, Boston University School of Medicine, told Reuters Sunday.

Farrer said his research was done in collaboration with Dr. Peter St. George

Hyslop at the University of Toronto and had been published in the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) in the past month.

"Work on chromosome 12 has been going on for the last year as part of the intensive effort to look at other candidate genes that are causative factors for Alzheimer's."

Farrer was in the south Indian city of Cochin for an international conference on Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, degenerative disorder of the brain which affects memory, emotion and thought processes. The

disease is usually seen in people over the age of 60, though some in their 40s and 50s have been affected by it.

There is at present very little knowledge about what causes the fatal disease. Neither is there a cure for Alzheimer's, which an estimated 18 million people around the world now suffer from.

Experts at the conference projected that this figure would touch 30 million by 2020, with about 75 per cent of the victims located in the developing world.

Presently, disorders in four different human genes in chromosome 1, 14, 19 and

21 are known to be causative factors for Alzheimer's. Farrer said it was "not yet known what this gene in chromosome 12 is, and to what extent the gene will be a player in the Alzheimer picture."

"But it is a player and there are probably other genes yet uncovered," he said. His group was continuing research after identifying chromosome 12.

"Right now we are trying to hone in on the gene and narrow the region. Once we get small enough, we'll begin looking at candidate genes that we know are definitely located in that region."

## Congo planes bomb Uganda; fear of spreading war grows

KAMPALA (AFP) — Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) warplanes bombed Uganda at the weekend after Kampala warned it might attack Ugandan rebels allegedly fighting alongside Kinshasa government soldiers in the east of the DRC.

The attack against the western Ugandan village of Bukaka, five kilometres from the border along the Ruwenzori mountains, caused no harm, with the bombs falling in the forest, a local official told AFP Monday.

He added that in a similar, previously unpublished attack in the region in mid-August, the bombs also fell wide.

"I think such attacks are intended to provoke us into action. But we have first to study the situation," a military officer told the state-owned New Vision newspaper.

The bombardment came amid fears of spreading war in the region.

Uganda recently accused Sudan of sending troops — including Ugandan rebels — to help President Laurent Kabila and his allies from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia fight Tutsi-led rebels in the east of the DRC.

And Khartoum Sunday announced a general war mobilisation with the Sudanese Council of Ministers accusing Uganda and Eritrea of spearheading attacks in southern Sudan in support of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army.

Kinshasa accuses Kampala of sending troops to fight alongside the DRC insurgents who launched a revolution against President Laurent Kabila on Aug. 2.

Kampala denies it, saying its troops in the DRC are merely flushing out Ugandan rebels from rear bases along the border.

It is maintaining that denial despite reliable reports that an elite Ugandan unit fought alongside the rebels southwest of Kinshasa, and sightings of Ugandan soldiers in the northeastern city of Kisangani.

Rwanda, for its part, also accused by Kinshasa of sending troops to hack the rebels, maintains it has no soldiers at all in the DRC, despite numerous reports of Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated troops fighting alongside the rebels and providing strategic expertise.

In Kabila's own 1996-97 revolution, Rwanda acknowledged only after Kabila had deposed long-time dictator Mobutu Sese Seko that its troops had played a key role in the fighting.

But Kabila, a Muluba

from the mineral-rich southeastern province of Katanga, fell out with his Tutsi allies, who want to clear their own Hutu rebels from bases up and down the east of the DRC.

Sunday, Ugandan Regional Cooperation Minister Amama Mubazi said in an interview published in the state newspaper that Uganda was likely to attack any Ugandan rebels found fighting alongside Kabila's army.

"It depends on their numbers and where they are," he said.

"If they are many and are in strategically important places and a threat to Uganda, then an attack on them will be considered."

Ugandan press reports have over the past two weeks backed DRC rebel claims that the Sudanese government has sent at least 2,000 troops, including 700 Sudanese-backed Ugandan rebels, to help Kabila quell the rebellion.

Sudan denied that its troops were involved in the war in the DRC, saying that Khartoum's support for Kabila was of a "political nature".

Uganda and Sudan broke off diplomatic relations in 1995, accusing each other of backing rebel groups hostile to their respective governments.

Mubazi said that Kabila's attempt to forge an alliance with Khartoum could bring "a new dimension" to Uganda's involvement in the DRC conflict.

"Kabila's forging an alliance with the authorities in Khartoum brings in a new dimension because Sudan is prone to destabilising Uganda. This will mean Kabila aiding and abetting these plans by Sudan against Uganda," he said.

Mubazi said that he did not think that Kabila's forces had the capacity to push Ugandans from their positions inside the DRC. "Unless the Sudanese and the others come in, the only forces that could possibly come in to fight against us are Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Why would they fight us? These are our friends," he said.

But he warned: "Should they indeed, do the unthinkable, or should this alliance expand and include our enemies the Sudanese, who are motivated to fight us, then in that case there will be a possibility that we can just fight in Congo. We are more than prepared for such a possibility."

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Democrats speak against impeachment

WASHINGTON (UPI) — With the House Judiciary Committee on the brink of taking up the impeachment of President Clinton, some Democrats say his alleged crimes are not severe enough to warrant his removal from office. Speaking on "Fox News Sunday" Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said: "He has done a lot of damage to this country with what he has done. I said before, I don't excuse, condone or rationalise the severity of what he has done, but it does not rise to the level of impeachment." Harkin said the country was already disabled by the scandal and should not have to go through another 12 or 18 months of seeing this on the front pages of newspapers day after day. Meanwhile, a number of Democrats say their leader has a new confidence after the release of the videotape from his grand jury appearance by the House Judiciary Committee. Sen. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., said what appeared like an avalanche a week ago now appears to be a strikingly partisan affair, while Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., said the hardliners in the Republican Party in the House want to press this issue for electoral purposes. Both men, who attended separate fund-raisers with Clinton this week in California, appeared on CBS's "Face The Nation."

#### Taliban target last opposition pockets in central Afghanistan

KABUL (AFP) — The Taliban are advancing on the remaining areas in central Afghanistan held by the pro-Iranian Hezb-i-Wahdat faction, the Islamic militia's radio said Monday. Radio Shariat said the latest gain was Panjab district in central Bamiyan province, which it said was captured at the weekend with heavy casualties suffered by the Hezb-i-Wahdat led by Karim Khalili. No independent confirmation of the report was immediately available. "Despite consolidating the already seized areas, the (Taliban) are advancing towards other areas still under the control of the Khalili militia," the radio said. The Panjab district includes strategic supply routes for the Hezb-i-Wahdat, which has suffered heavy losses across Bamiyan province since the capital, Bamiyan City, fell to Taliban forces on Sept. 13. The Taliban captured the province's Yakawlang district early this week, depriving Khalili loyalists of their last airstrip in Bamiyan. Khalili's group is one of the main factions in the anti-Taliban northern alliance, along with those of Afghan ex-Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masood and ex-Communist General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Dostam lost his native northern provinces to the Taliban in August and Khalili his central stronghold early this month, leaving Masood alone in resisting the advancing militia.

#### Court to try China's first phone harassment case

BEIJING (R) — A Chinese businesswoman who says obscene phone calls ruined her life has sued her tormentor, a former co-worker, in China's first phone harassment case, the China Daily said Monday. Ji Meili, 43, manager of a firm in Dali county in northwestern Shaanxi province, said she was besieged for 20 days in August by a nightly two-hour barrage of calls. "I want to make love with you" and "How about your body?" were some of the phrases she heard around midnight each night, the newspaper said. The harassment wrecked Ji's family life, causing her to separate from her husband, she was quoted as saying. The calls were traced by the local telecommunications office to He Kaiyou, director of Dali County Agricultural Bureau and a former colleague of Ji's, the report said. Ji said she and He used to have conflicts at work and that He felt "jealousy and hatred" because she had become a successful businesswoman after leaving the agricultural bureau. Ji was seeking a court ruling forcing He to stop the phone calls and publicly apologise and pay compensation of 10,000 yuan (\$1,205) for emotional distress and 7,880 yuan for direct losses. The Dali County People's Court will hold hearings early next month, the newspaper said.

#### Volcano erupts on Kamchatka Peninsula

MOSCOW (AP) — A volcano has erupted on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, sending 100-metre columns of ash into the sky, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported Monday. At night, the 1,537-metre high Karymsky volcano sends out a glow from top to bottom, ITAR-TASS said. There are 29 active volcanoes on the Kamchatka Peninsula, located eight time zones east of Moscow along the Pacific Rim's "ring of fire." In the last decade, eight of those volcanoes have erupted repeatedly, sometimes sending up ash and smoke 12 kilometres high. A Russo-Japanese expedition will travel to a site 3 kilometres from the Karymsky volcano Thursday to carry out seismic research, ITAR-TASS said.

## Ten years on, Julie Ward murder trial to start

NAIROBI (R) — Ten years after the murder of British tourist Julie Ward in a Kenyan wildlife reserve, the trial begins Tuesday of the game warden charged with her brutal killing.

The charred and mutilated remains of 28-year-old Ward — her leg was hacked off and her skull smashed — were found in the Masai Mara game reserve in southwestern Kenya in September 1988.

The long, controversial and often bungled hunt for her killer may finally be drawing to a close when Simon Ole Makallah, head warden at the game park at the time of the murder, steps into the dock at Nairobi's High Court.

When Ward went missing, her father John flew to Kenya, hired five light aircraft and, with the help of Makallah, found her body in a remote corner of

the park, a few kilometres from her broken-down jeep.

Kenyan authorities, keen to protect vital tourist revenues, at first tried to cover up the murder, saying she had been attacked by wild animals, or had even committed suicide.

Such claims were derided by John Ward who embarked on a frustrating and costly search for justice. Makallah was his chief suspect from "the first day I saw him".

It was not an easy task. Dissatisfied by what he regarded as a cursory Kenyan investigation, Ward commissioned his own post-mortem and forensic tests in Britain.

In 1989, Kenya agreed to allow Britain's Scotland Yard to investigate, which culminated in the trial in 1992 of two junior Masai Mara wardens. Both were acquitted, the judge accused the police of

incompetence, and recommended closer scrutiny of Makallah's possible role in the killing after he gave evidence for the prosecution.

But the investigation made little progress. Meanwhile, Makallah was rising fast through the ranks of Kenyan wildlife management, eventually becoming an assistant director of the Kenya Wildlife Service.

By 1994, an exasperated Ward accused Kenyan police of giving up on the case. It took another three years before the wheels really started to turn, when Ward himself joined the investigation, working directly alongside a small team of Kenyan detectives.

"We've done everything from digging up pit latrine toilets to searching in stock rooms for a piece of paper 10 years old," the Suffolk hotelier told

Reuters on a recent visit to Kenya.

Makallah was arrested on July 17 and charged with murder.

Kenyan Attorney-General Amos Wako said more people could be charged in the case depending on the results of forensic tests.

Ward told Reuters that he was convinced that this time Kenyan police were tracking down the "right people".

"On this occasion there is more evidence than there ever was," he said.

At a pre-trial hearing two weeks ago, Makallah denied involvement in the murder, and said he was a victim of a "relentless pursuit" by John Ward who was "using his daughter's death as a money-spinning, publicity-seeking crusade".

Makallah is expected to enter a formal plea Tuesday.



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BRIEF

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# World News



Malaysian riot police march down a main road in Kuala Lumpur to disperse protesters in Kuala Lumpur. Several thousand protesters shouted anti-government slogans and called for Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to step down Monday during fresh demonstrations in the heart of the capital city (Reuters photo)

## Anwar's supporters continue protests on national holiday

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Riot police Monday chased through the streets of the Malaysian capital thousands of demonstrators demanding the release of a popular former deputy prime minister.

Witnesses saw police grabbing dozens of protesters and pushing them into police buses. But police refused to say how many were detained. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's decision to fire and arrest Anwar Ibrahim, his former heir apparent, has stirred anger among those hoping for political reform. Anwar's main platform until his arrest last Sunday.

Undaunted by police batons, tear gas and nearly 150 arrests, several thousand Anwar supporters continued protests Monday, a national holiday, for the fourth straight day.

Chanting "Reformasi" or "Reforms," they marched from a courthouse, carrying banners that said "Free Anwar."

Policemen, drumming their shields, advanced and then began to chase them through the lanes and into the main shopping district where startled holiday shoppers huddled into corners.

Police also turned their wrath on reporters and photographers, shouting "Go, go, go!"

A local human rights group, SUARAM, said 60 people were arrested. Among them was Tien Chua, the chairman of the newly formed Coalition for People's Democracy, an umbrella group of organisations that, back Anwar, SUARAM spokeswoman Elizabeth Wong said.

Anwar and 16 of his associates have been held under a harsh security law that allows indefinite imprisonment without trial.

Neither Anwar nor any of his detained allies have been arraigned in a court.

Anwar has been accused of crimes that include unlawful homosexual acts and leaking state secrets. He has denied the charges, saying they were politically motivated.

His arrest has drawn strong support from Lim Kit Siang, his one-time political foe and the opposition leader of parliament, who has called for the parliament to investigate allegations of corruption levelled against both Anwar and Mahathir.

"What Malaysians want to know are all the full facts about corruption, cronyism and nepotism — regardless of whether they affect Mahathir or Anwar," said Lim in a statement.

In a home videotape made on the night of his arrest, Anwar accused his former boss of allowing his commercial interests and those of his family and cronies to sway his judgement on public spending and controls.

Mahathir, in turn, has said his designated heir didn't know how to manage the economy. Malaysia, after years of phenomenal growth, slipped into a recession this year under the impact of the Asian economic crisis.

Protests, unheard of for nearly a decade, are becoming a regular feature in Kuala Lumpur.

Sunday, more than 10,000 supporters trudged for several kilometers to attend a gathering organised by Malaysia's opposition Islamic party after police had blocked cars from entering a village road.

A day before, police beat demonstrators and used a water cannon to disperse a rally of more than 3,000 people.

Twenty-nine Malaysians were arrested.

Even small public gatherings and outdoor assemblies in Malaysia require police permits.

## Le Pen fights for survival at appeal court

VERSAILLES, France (AFP) — France's far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen fought for his political survival Monday as a heavily-guarded appeal court began examining a decision to bar him from holding public office for two years.

The court was guarded by four companies of riot police as anti- and pro-Le Pen demonstrators, separated by crowd control barriers, massed peacefully outside.

Should he lose his appeal, Le Pen will be unable to run in European elections next June, a development that could throw up a challenge to his leadership from the number two of the extremist National Front, Bruno Megret.

Megret was attending the two-day hearing along with another prominent Le Pen lieutenant, Bruno Gollnisch.

The hearing before the Versailles appeals court outside Paris takes place following a plea from the 70-year-old Le Pen against an April 2 ruling stripping him of the right to run for public office for throwing punches at a Socialist rival during campaigning last year.

A decision on Le Pen's plea may not be forthcoming before a month.

He faces the court a day after his National Front lost a new bid for its sole seat in parliament in the southern port city of Toulon.

The burly outspoken politician was convicted after Socialist Anne Marie Peulvast-Bergeal accused him of assault during campaigning for general elections last May in the Paris suburb of Mantes-la-Jolie, where Le Pen's daughter Marie-Caroline was running against the left-winger.

Television footage aired across France showed Le Pen screaming and lunging at Peulvast-Bergeal.

In its April 2 ruling based on videos of the clash, the court said Le Pen "clearly lost all self-control... remained deaf to appeals for calm... and himself sought contact with his opponents, even physical confrontation."

"Such aggressive and provocative behaviour is clearly unworthy of a politician and party leader and consequently deserves severe punishment."

Le Pen, who called on his supporters to demonstrate outside the Versailles courthouse, has said the sentence was "out of proportion" and has accused the court of caving in to political orders "to eliminate a dangerous political rival."

The founder of the anti-immigrant far-right National Front, which garners around 15 per cent of the vote in national polls, could explore a new legal avenue by trying to take the case to France's highest appeals court, the Cour de Cassation, should the Versailles tribunal throw out his plea.

A new appeal would give him added time and possibly enable him to run after in the June European election.

Should he be disqualified for the European polls however, Megret has said he wants to head the Front slate.

Le Pen to date has sharply countered any such idea, saying he would prefer to see his wife, Jany, run in his place, keeping up the name of the founder of the National Front.

Though lacking Le Pen's populist appeal, the highly-educated 49-year-old Megret has made it clear he wants to be considered a potential successor and has distanced himself from Le Pen's more controversial political statements.

Megret is also said to be the strategist behind offers of local government posts to mainstream right-wingers this year which attracted several prominent conservative politicians and caused severe disarray within the conservative opposition.

The notion of sealing deals with the mainstream right remains anathema to many of Le Pen's cohorts.

Whatever the outcome of the current hearings, Le Pen's judicial troubles are far from over.

Last week, the legal committee of the European Parliament decided to lift the leader's parliamentary immunity for repeating his claim in Germany last year that the Nazi death camps were "a detail" of the history of World War II.

The European Parliament is expected to confirm the decision next month, opening the doors to a trial in Munich for incitement to racial hatred.

## Cambodian opposition chiefs meet on eve of coalition talks

BANGKOK (AFP) — Cambodian opposition leaders were meeting here Monday on the eve of proposed talks to form a coalition government in their strife-torn country.

Opposition military chief Nhiek Bun Chhay said the talks in Bangkok with royalist FUNCINPEC party leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh, leading dissident Sam Rainsy and other opposition figures were intended to find answers ahead of a planned dialogue with strongman Hun Sen and his dominant Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in Phnom Penh Tuesday.

"There are still some problems and we need to work out the answers," he told AFP.

Prince Ranariddh and Sam Rainsy, a former finance minister and now leader of the Sam Rainsy Party, flew to Bangkok Friday after the National Assembly, elected on July 26, was sworn in at the historic Angkor temple complex.

The ceremony Thursday was overshadowed by the firing of a rocket-propelled grenade, allegedly in an attempt on Hun Sen's life.

Some officials identified Nhiek Bun Chhay and his forces as the prime suspects in the attack in near-by Siem Reap town, which killed a young boy and injured three others, but told AFP.

Four rocket-propelled B40 grenades, a common weapon in Cambodia, were primed for launch by remote control on a road in Siem Reap Thursday, as members of parliament drove by for the swearing-in at nearby Angkor Wat.

However, only one of the grenades was fired — with the others apparently defused by monsoon rains — missing Hun Sen's passing vehicle and slamming into a nearby house.

Nhiek Bun Chhay said he would meet Prince Ranariddh and Sam Rainsy in Bangkok later Monday.

The opposition leaders have not agreed to form a coalition with Hun Sen, who lacks the two-thirds majority in parliament needed to govern alone, but some form of coalition administration is expected to be established.

Tuesday's scheduled talks between Prince Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC and Hun Sen's CPP will be the first formal talks over a coalition since the July 26 polls.

An aide to Prince Ranariddh said he was expected to return to Phnom Penh Tuesday but that he and Hun Sen would be represented at the talks by delegates.

CPP sources said earlier the meeting was aimed at gaining the FUNCINPEC support Hun Sen needs to form a government. They said the talks would include seven senior representatives from the two parties.

Sam Rainsy said he expected to be sidelined by a CPP-FUNCINPEC coalition but also expected to return to Cambodia.

"The CPP wants to divide the opposition and form parliament in coalition with FUNCINPEC and with Rainsy in opposition," he added.

"At this time, I say I intend to be present at the second sitting of the National Assembly Wednesday unless there are major developments in the meantime," Sam Rainsy said.

He urged the CPP to refrain from any attempts to block the opposition, including preventing members from leaving the country.

Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh were co-premiers in the last government which emerged from U.N.-sponsored polls in 1993, but their uneasy power-sharing broke down when Hun Sen ousted the prince in street fighting in July 1997.

Nhiek Bun Chhay has since led a small resistance force against Hun Sen troops on the country's northern border with Thailand. He claims to have thousands of fighters but foreign military analysts put their number in the hundreds.

Preliminary talks between the opposing military factions have ended in stalemate and foreign diplomats doubt that Nhiek Bun Chhay would be allowed to return to Phnom Penh.

Dr. Rodney Ellis, a physician at Georgetown University Medical Centre who is a member of the congregation, examined Reno and advised that she be taken to the hospital, the Justice Department statement said. He accompanied her.

Reno had a similar fainting spell while attending a conference in Mexico City in November 1997. Doctors attributed that fainting to exhaustion and dehydration.

Reno suffers from the mildest form of Parkinson's disease, which occasionally causes her left hand to shake. Katz said Reno was otherwise in good health.

## Serbia says its 'anti-terrorist' crackdown in Kosovo is over

BELGRADE (AFP) — Faced with intensifying preparations by NATO for punitive air strikes, the Serbian government announced Monday that its seven-month crackdown against ethnic Albanian insurgents in Kosovo ended soon.

"Anti-terrorist operations were completed today," Premier Mirko Marjanovic told parliament, called into emergency session to appoint "a provisional" government for the province.

"The terrorist gangs have been defeated," he said, adding that ethnic Albanians who surrendered their weapons within 10 days "will be given an amnesty provided that they have not personally committed any crime."

Anti-terrorist units could now "reduce their presence on the ground and start returning to their bases," Marjanovic went on, but "scaled-down forces will remain on alert in their bases for a while in case a terrorist organisation reforms somewhere in Kosovo."

The announcement came two days after U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen warned Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic that he faced the threat of NATO airstrikes unless the bloodshed in Kosovo ended soon.

Speaking in the Macedonian capital Skopje Saturday, Cohen said: "Action should be taken by Mr. Milosevic soon, and failing that then it will be up to NATO to take action. I believe NATO's credibility is at stake and NATO will have to stand behind the words and not just issue empty words."

Cohen reiterated his remarks Monday in Rome, where he held talks with Italian Defence Minister Beniamino Andreata.

"A very strong and credible threat must be made on Milosevic to back away from what he's currently doing," Cohen told reporters after the meeting.

He made no explicit reference to Marjanovic's announcement, but said: "The position of the United States is based upon past experience."

Milosevic "should pull his military back, his police back, allow the providing of humanitarian assistance for the non governmental organisations and sit down at the bargaining table to peace talks on the issue of Kosovo."

Cohen warned that "because of the outset of winter, 50,000 people are at risk of starving to death or freezing to death" in Kosovo.

Marjanovic told parliament in Belgrade that the situation in Kosovo now made it possible to put into effect an agreement reached between Milosevic and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia in Moscow in June.

At his meeting with Yeltsin, Milosevic said that "security forces will reduce their presence outside their permanent bases as terrorist activities cease."

Marjanovic told the 220 deputies present in the 250-seat parliament they had been summoned to appoint a "temporary executive council" with the task of coordinating the operations of "all civilian structures" in Kosovo.

Reacting to the announcement, a NATO official in Brussels said the alliance would check for itself that Serbian forces had ended their crackdown in Kosovo.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: "Slobodan Milosevic has not kept his promises in the past. We shall check for ourselves on the ground if this latest announcement of an end to hostilities is matched by the facts."

At the start of the parliamentary session, broadcast live on television, members of parliament stood for one minute in silent tribute to 94 policemen and 32 army officers and soldiers who have been killed in Kosovo.

The figures were the first complete casualty toll given by authorities since the crackdown began in February.

## Lesotho settles down as soldiers, civil servants return

MASERU (AFP) — Armed Lesotho troops Monday turned themselves in to southern African intervention forces, in a step closer to stability as government offices reopened after bloodletting and looting last week.

Shopkeepers, meanwhile, returned to their Maseru stores to assess damage in the battered centre of town.

More than 1,000 troops of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), part of which had mutinied after escalating protests over allegedly rigged May elections, reported back under orders from the South African army.

The Lesotho troops had fled as their bases came under fire after mainly South African forces moved in on Sept. 22 to quash what President Nelson Mandela called a "virtual coup."

Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili had asked for help from the Southern African Development Community after junior officers arrested their seniors and sided with opposition supporters alleging massive vote-rigging.

Military sources said soldiers were reallocated to their own tattered army at the Rajemose base near the capital Maseru, where demonstrations and clashes had taken place for weeks outside King Letsie III's palace.

Most of the soldiers, previously stationed at Maseru's Rajemose and Mokoanyane bases, reported back with rifles and ammunition in separate hands, as the South African army command had ordered.

Some 1,200 men had already returned to the base Saturday but since only a handful then brought their weapons, they were told to return Monday.

"There are more than Saturday and most of them have come back with their weapons," the South African commander of the return operation, Major Anton Labuschagne, told AFP.

A Basotho sergeant said the additional troops had come because those who first went back Saturday had assured them that the southern African soldiers would not shoot or arrest them.

"When we went back, we told those who did not come with us that they could come back and that nothing would happen to them," he told AFP.

The intervention force, comprised of South Africans and Botswanans, was Monday estimated to have about half of the LDF, an army of about 3,000 men, in hand.

As the soldiers returned, life returned to the devastated capital. Most civil servants went to their offices and a government press secretary told AFP: "Everybody is back to work in all departments."

Shopkeepers returned, six days after the capital had become a blazing no-go zone, and surveyed the damage to their burnt-out, looted stores while fruit-sellers began trading on rubble-strewn sidewalks.

The streets were being patrolled by soldiers from the Botswana Defence Force, which Monday announced that it would be sending another 120 troops to Maseru, bringing the total foreign force here to 1,400 troops.

Colonel Robbie Hartslief, the commander of the intervention, "Operation Bolesas", told AFP that dissident soldiers may still be hiding in the mountains and could strike at southern African troops with guerrilla tactics.

Hartslief said the intervention force had not been able to communicate the order to surrender to the nine other military bases in Lesotho, all outside Maseru, and did not know if there may be more dissidents there.

The main aim of the intervention force, which found massive arms caches at the Maseru military bases, was to disarm Lesotho soldiers.

"I want to disarm them because all of them fought against us," Hartslief said.

The job was complicated by the fact that the LDF had no official weapons inventory, his colleague, area commander Colonel Jorrie Jordaan told the SAPA news agency. "The reality is that nobody can say all the weapons have been returned because there is no inventory."

The precise death toll in the intervention mission, which led to heavy criticism of South Africa, remained unknown. Red Cross officials in Lesotho told AFP they feared as many as a hundred people had died.

The defence ministers of South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe, the so-called troika formed in 1994 to oversee Lesotho's democracy, were to arrive in Maseru Monday for a military briefing.

They were expected to hold talks with premier Mosisili and to brief their own leaders on the situation in the troubled country.

## Reno 'fit' after fainting in church

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Janet Reno was released from a hospital Monday after an overnight stay following her second fainting spell in a year.

Paul Donovan, a spokesman for Georgetown University Medical Centre, said Reno's doctor had pronounced her "100 per cent fit for duty."

The 60-year-old attorney general fainted briefly during a church service Sunday. She was treated at Georgetown, reported in good condition and held overnight for observation.

She cancelled a trip to New York for Monday. She had planned to tour a school and give a speech. Reno's spokesman, Bert Brandenburg, said she hoped to return to work later Monday.

"This is just a fainting spell. Her condition is good," Paul Katz, the medical centre's chief operating officer, said Sunday afternoon. Katz said she was in good spirits and joking.

He said her heart rhythm, EKG, heart rate, respiration and blood pressure were good.

Reno read work materials and spoke with relatives at the hospital.

Katz said Reno fainted at Full Gospel AME Church in suburban Clinton, Maryland, an hour and 15 minutes after the service began. Brandenburg said she became nauseated while standing, sat down, fainted briefly and recovered but continued to feel nauseated.

Dr. Rodney Ellis, a physician at Georgetown University Medical Centre who is a member of the congregation, examined Reno and advised that she be taken to the hospital, the Justice Department statement said. He accompanied her.

Reno had a similar fainting spell while attending a conference in Mexico City in November 1997. Doctors attributed that fainting to exhaustion and dehydration.

Reno suffers from the mildest form of Parkinson's disease, which occasionally causes her left hand to shake. Katz said Reno was otherwise in good health.



## Jordan Times

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Editorial and Advertising offices  
Jordan Press Foundation,  
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman

Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585

Facsimile: Editorial: 5696183, Advertising: 5693337

E-mail: jortimes@go.com.jo

Web Site: <http://www.access2arabia.com/jordantimes/>

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## Peace at peril

SHOULD THE violent clash between Israeli Arabs and police in the Arab town of Umm Al Fahm Sunday be seen as an isolated incident or is it "reminiscent of what happened in the West Bank," as Knesset member Hashem Mahameed was quoted as saying? A demonstration by Israeli Arabs against the confiscation of about 50 hectares of Arab land by Israel witnessed Israeli police using excessive force and even live ammunition to remove the protesters who had erected a tent on the land they claim to be their own. Israeli authorities allege that the disputed land has been confiscated from its rightful Arab owners for military purposes.

The readiness and willingness of Israeli security forces to evict Arabs by violent means demonstrates that the treatment of Israel's two communities is far from the equanimity Israel would like the world to believe it applies to all its citizens. Minorities everywhere are deemed vulnerable groups of people who deserve special treatment and protection. Israel is treaty bound to respect and uphold minority rights. All forms of discrimination against minorities are illegal especially when force is used against them as if they were enemies of the state.

It goes without saying of course that bow Israel treats its non-Jewish citizens is not a strictly domestic issue that should not come under international interventions. That is why we in Jordan supported the establishment recently of the International Criminal Court — so that the kind of treatment the Israeli Arabs are currently being subjected to in Umm Al Fahm would fall within the jurisdiction of the international tribunal.

Jordanian concerns about the Umm Al Fahm incident as conveyed to the Israeli government through its ambassador in Amman, are compounded by the fact that the violence was perpetrated by Israel over the issue of Arab land in Israel proper. Naturally the brutal eviction of Israeli Arabs from their own lands does not bode well for a better Arab-Jewish future marked by coexistence and cooperation. If anything, the application of force by Israel on its Arab minority will open up old wounds at a time when dismay over a motionless peace process could begin to turn ugly. If Israel is truly committed to forging better Arab-Israeli relations, then let it not wreak havoc in its own backyard.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneh said Jordan has to face Israel's negative policies in a corresponding manner, and which in the end will affect Jordanian-Israeli relations. The Kingdom is still committed to, but the new government has hinted that the issue with Israel will take another dimension, he wrote. The warm peace that Jordan wanted will change into a cold relationship, what the writer called, the minimum-limit policy. Jordan's strategic choice is to continue to improve relations with Arab countries and ensure the Kingdom's role in Arab affairs, Faneh said, pointing to the minister of foreign affairs' condemnation of Turkish-Israeli military cooperation and support for Syria's position towards the peace treaty.

Al Ra'i's Tareq Masarwah criticised the Arab media for not publishing the Arab resolution on Israel submitted to the International Atomic Energy Commission, asking for what he called a Middle East free of nuclear weapons. The proposal included requests to inspect Israeli nuclear reactors, and a demand that Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the writer said. Meanwhile, Arab countries accepted the Agency's report, submitted to the Security Council, which agreed to continuing sanctions on Iraq, he added. Also, the Arab media did not hint to any Arab voice which asks the Security Council investigate the Americans bombing Sudan, Masarwah said. The media did not pay any attention to Swiss and French denials of American reports which claimed that Iraqi missiles were carrying VX gas, he added, concluding that the Arab media is in a mess.

## View from the Fourth Circle

## The brutal business of brotherhood

Rami G. Khouri

A FEW days ago, I found myself reading three texts that all related to issues of interest to me as a writer: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech at the United Nations, a report by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, and biblical passages about ancient Judah, Israel and Edom. This startling and distressing coincidence highlighted for me some of the politically and morally troubling dimensions that we see in the modern state of Israel, particularly as expressed by its strange prime minister and his video-values world.

The biblical tales I was reading told of King Amaziah of Judah slaughtering ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt (probably near the south-eastern Dead Sea plain), after which he captured another ten thousand Edomites and threw them off the top of a cliff "so that all were dashed to pieces" (2 Chronicles 25:11-12).

The bitter, often violent Israelite-Edomite relations were partly due to the fact that Jews and Edomites were once "brothers" — the Jews reportedly descendants of Jacob, and the Edomites of his brother Esau. Several biblical references (Amos 1:6-11; Deuteronomy 23:7) speak of the Edomites and Israelites or Judahites as "brothers," including God's intriguing command to the Israelites: "You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother."

Well, brotherhood seems to have been a rather fragile enterprise, in ancient times as today, to judge by last week's report by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, noting that since 1987, "Israel has destroyed some 2000 [Palestinian] houses, leaving more than ten thousand people homeless and living with family members in extremely crowded conditions."

It adds that house demolitions are a continuing Israeli policy that is often linked to the Israeli government's expropriation of tens of thousands of acres of Palestinian agricultural land, and the Israeli army ravishing thousands of other acres of Palestinian land (as we witnessed Sunday in the violent clashes over army expropriations of Arab land at Umm el-Fahm, in northern Israel).

In contemporary terms, demolishing a Palestinian Arab's home is about as severe and tragic a fate as one could imagine — a sort of slow death by demeaning dehumanisation at Israeli Jewish hands, a modern version of the ancient death by being "dashed to pieces."

I was particularly struck by the figure of ten thousand Palestinians having been uprooted from their demolished homes. I wondered: could we draw any political or moral parallels between the two thousand displaced Palestinians today and the ten thousand Edomites who were repeatedly slaugh-

tered by the Israelites and Judahites? Could we see the Israelis and Palestinians today — like the ancient Israelites and Edomites — as natural "brothers" who were doomed to suffer the painful consequences of their mutual enmity and existential struggle for one plot of land? Was a lasting and just peace possible while one brother destroyed the homes of ten thousand of his siblings in a land they both loved and owned?

As I was pondering this intriguing issue, who should step into the picture but the eminent entertainer himself, Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. His speech to the United Nations last week should go down in history as one of the great works of moral blasphemy and diplomatic buffoonery. Among other things, he called Israel "a modern miracle, the realisation of the vision of the Hebrew prophets," said that Israelis wanted peace with the Palestinians and offered them "jurisdiction" in parts of the West Bank and Gaza, and added that "the territory we are negotiating about is virtually uninhabited by Palestinians," said that parting "with one square inch of this land is agonising to us...[because] every stone, every hill, every valley resonates with our fathers' footsteps... from the cradle of Jewish civilisation through the biblical kings and prophets, through the sages, scholars and poets of Israel, down to our time," and, hitting the highwater mark of his virtual morality soul, told his U.N. audience: "Remember: At its widest point Israel is all of 50 miles. And should it cede all of the West Bank, that distance would be reduced to the distance between this building [the U.N. headquarters in Manhattan] and LaGuardia Airport."

My immediate reaction was to wonder why the people of LaGuardia Airport had never attacked the U.N. headquarters and slaughtered ten thousand Manhattanites? The distance between LaGuardia and the U.N. building is meaningless in geographic, strategic, and moral terms, because neither entity occupies or denies the existence of the other. They have negotiated sovereignty and territorial rights that are fair to both sides, and thus there is peace between LaGuardia and the UN building. In Israel and Palestine, though, Israel offers the Palestinians limited "jurisdiction" in a territorial bingo board, without acknowledging the right of the Palestinians to equal sovereignty and nationhood in this common ancestral land. And thus there is no peace in Israel and Palestine.

It's not the distance, stupid, it's the quality of negotiated rights.

Mr. Netanyahu confirmed yet again why so many people are sceptical about the prospects of credible peace-making under his rule in Israel: his speech at the U.N. emphasised the darkest and most troubling side of both modern Israel and

ancient Israel — the haunted, exiled, humiliated, and slaughtered spectacle of a weak and helpless people, eternally vulnerable, marked in perpetuity by God to suffer as his chosen tribe, surrounded for all time by hostile neighbours, fated to live in endless vigilance, suffering more than any other people on earth — and, consequently, today relying primarily for their survival and well-being on a policy of forcing their neighbours and brothers to bow down to Israel's self-defined and priority security requirements.

Mr. Netanyahu's speech is a frightening document of a man whose policies are more likely to replicate the tragic cycle of violence of the King Amaziah of our world than to achieve the spiritual peace and material justice that are God's promise in the biblical narrative (centuries after Amaziah, when the Jews were exiled to Babylon, the Bible recounts, the Edomites taunted the Jews, and cheered the Babylonians).

Through their elected leader, it seems that the Israeli people choose to engage the world through a confusing and tragic prism — one that is made up of a deadly combination of endless psychological self-flagellation, territorial and colonial arrogance, and blindness to the human reality and the equal national rights of their Palestinian brothers.

The Hebrew prophets, kings, judges and sages had one and only one purpose in this world — the propagation of a righteous life, and the promotion of compassion, mercy, equality, and justice among brothers, as dictated by the covenant with God. For Mr. Netanyahu to keep destroying Palestinian homes and to bring the number of Palestinian homeless to ten thousand, while invoking the names of the great Hebrew personalities of the past, is a crude insult to both the brothers and neighbours of Israel today, and its patriarchs from the past.

The ancient Israelites once had an opportunity to develop genuinely brotherly and peaceful relations with their Edomite siblings, but they failed. Modern Israel faces perhaps a similar opportunity. Will it seize it by sharing the land of Palestine and Israel on the basis of equality, or will Israel remain mired in the perpetual violence of its own historical trauma and flawed self-image? The answer to this question, wherever it may be, is certainly not at LaGuardia Airport. The Prophet Amos knew that when he said: "Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."

I, for one, refuse to accept Benjamin Netanyahu's multi-media moralistic nonsense as the verdict of the Israeli people on their condition in the world today. The Israeli and Jewish people must tell us: did their great prophets represent a rationalisation of conquest and subjugation, or a commitment to coexistence and justice?

## Weak governments, big crisis

By Gwynne Dyer

"THE AUDIENCE'S fatigue won out," wrote Munich's "Sueddeutsche Zeitung" on Sunday night as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl went down to defeat. (Kohl) held power so long, 16 years long, because his way of exercising power had something soothing, almost banal about it. But towards the end the feeling got stronger and stronger that the same old song was no longer good for new times."

Fair enough, but they shouldn't expect new tunes from Gerhard Schröder, the man who finally toppled Kohl and completed a centre-left sweep of all four big European Union countries (Germany, France, Britain and Italy). "Realism and action are more important to us than ideology," Schröder promised, seeking to counter Kohl's "red-scare" campaign against his Social Democratic Party (SPD) and its likely coalition partners, the environmentalist Greens. "We won't do everything differently, but we'll do it better."

In fact, they'll probably just do less, because the new German government is almost bound to be semi-paralysed by its internal divisions. The SPD may have gone all centrist, but the Greens espouse policies like removing all nuclear weapons from Germany, letting Turkey into the European Union, banning genetically modified foods, and legalising soft drugs.

They won't win many of the arguments, but it's going to be a very bumpy partnership. Which means that the largest country in the European Union is getting a new and inherently weak government just three months before 300 million Europeans abandon their traditional marks, francs, liras, pesetas and guilders in favour of the "euro."

Changing currencies is always a delicate business, but here we have the second-largest economic bloc in the world attempting to change currencies in the midst of a global market meltdown. This may end up being a quite exciting exercise, for the "single currency" was very specifically Helmut Kohl's baby, meant to tie Germany inextricably into Europe and so "Gulliverise"

the dangerous giant that was created by unification in 1990.

If Kohl were still the German chancellor on January 1, 1999, the markets would doubtless trust him to do whatever was needed to make the new currency's birth a success. Whereas Schröder was a late and reluctant convert to the euro, and most people suspect that he only changed his religion for electoral purposes: he has never said a kind word about the euro in public.

If the markets don't trust Schröder to defend the euro, then it is very vulnerable indeed. In the circumstances, the safest course would be for Schröder to propose a two-year postponement of the introduction of the euro the moment he takes office. Nothing would be lost except a bit of face (none of it Schröder's), and the possibility of the global panic spreading into European markets would be much less. But the likelihood that Schröder can form a cabinet capable of such decisive action is approximately zero.

History at the best of times tends to be one damned thing after another, and these are not the best of times. The financial crisis that began sixteen months ago with the devaluation of the Thai currency has spread inexorably until it engulfed first all of South-East and East Asia, then Russia, and now even one of the biggest Western hedge funds, U.S.-based Long-Term Capital Management (which was bailed out for \$3.5 billion last week).

At this point in the proceedings, a happy ending to this economic cycle seems highly unlikely. (But then, when have they ended happily?) However, this still leaves us with a range of options from "small recession, not many hurt", at the optimistic end, to a reprise of the Great Depression at the other extreme.

The likeliest outcome, of course, is somewhere in between. Just where in between depends to a large extent on the actions of governments — but this makes for a grim scenario, since almost all the larger countries have governments of unprecedented weakness.

The limiting cases, of course, are the American and Russian governments, which are respectively paral-

ysed by sexual scandal and systemic collapse. But few other big countries are in better shape.

Japan's new prime minister, Keizo Obuchi, is a neutered compromise not expected to last more than a year or two. France's President Jacques Chirac shot himself in the foot by calling a premature election that gave the socialist opposition a parliamentary majority. Italy's Prime Minister Romano Prodi faces an imminent Communist threat to topple him. Even India has a highly unstable government among the ten biggest economies, the only ones with strong and stable governments are Britain, China and Canada.

Gerhard Schröder fits very comfortably into this alarmingly large group of under-achievers: he is a man who promises little and will probably deliver less. He has been marketed in Germany as "Herr Blair", the German clone of Tony Blair, who led the British Labour Party back into office last year after 18 years in the wilderness, but his credentials as a "new man" are rather shaky.

Quite apart from the fact that Schröder is older than Blair, has been married four times, and never played guitar in a rock band, he simply lacks visible ideas of his own. He claims to represent Germany's "New Centre", but most of his own party, the SPD, is well to his left, and his probable coalition partners, the Greens, are somewhere else entirely.

In the next six months, Schröder will be called on to take over the presidency of the European Union and preside over the introduction of the euro; to approve or veto NATO military action in Kosovo; to decide whether and how to rescue Russia financially; and to withhold or commit Germany's resources (for with Japan's decline, Germany is now the world's second-biggest economy) to any plan to shore up the foundering global market economy.

Unfortunately, neither his personality nor his probable political alliances make decisive action on any of these fronts likely. As the crisis deepens around the world, the list of weak or downright paralysed governments grows apace.

## LETTERS

## Freedom of speech for some

To the editor:

THE BRITISH Foreign Secretary, "Bäsi", after years of haggling and political manoeuvring, realised the British dream of a normal life for Salman Rushdie, author of the allegedly religiously-offensive work, "The Satanic Verses." The British government can rejoice over the anticipated savings on withdrawal of the security arrangements for Rushdie, and for guaranteeing freedom of expression for its citizens.

Why is it that freedom of expression becomes an issue in the West when the feelings of millions of Muslims are hurt? This didn't happen when a French author was jailed, a few months back, for claiming that the scale of the Holocaust during World War II was "somewhat overstated."

Dr. Masud Ahmad Malik, Swetich.

## GCC in U.S. to offset drop in oil prices

By George S. Hishmeh

THE GULF Arabs, including Saudi Arabia's respected Crown Prince Abdullah, were in Washington last week on a trade-and-investment offensive aimed at wooing American businesses to offset the precipitous drop in oil prices that has stunted the region.

The high-profile visit of the Saudi leader has eclipsed another significant American-Arab exchange, known as the U.S.-GCC Economic Dialogue, an annual government-to-government forum that began in 1985 to increase trade and investment between the United States and the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil producer, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman.

The talks between President Clinton and Crown Prince Abdullah focused primarily on political issues, and it was said by a U.S. spokesman that the next day's discussions the heir to the Saudi throne had with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright revealed "a clear meeting of the minds."

But the attention to the economic relationship was equally underscored at a dinner last Friday for about 1,000 American businessmen hosted by the U.S.-Saudi Business Council at the plush Willard Hotel and which was attended — a rare event — by Prince Abdullah, the 74-year-old brother of King Fahd, who was accompanied by his capable Finance and National Economy Minister Dr. Ibrahim Al Assaf. A closed session with American business and oil executives took place on Saturday at the residence of the Saudi ambassador here.

Prince Bandar.

These are challenging times for the economies of the region. The delegates to the U.S.-GCC meeting were told "it seems unlikely that (oil prices) will rise significantly in the near future." The warning came from Jan Kalicki, counselor of the Commerce Department and co-chair of the Dialogue, who was speaking at a luncheon earlier in the week for American businessmen.

Kalicki also underscored the fact that the population growth rates in the GCC countries are "among the highest in the world" which, he explained, means that per capita GDP growth rates are projected to fall in the next few years, "even if there is a moderate rise in oil prices." Moreover, he continued "the appetite for investment in developing nations on the part of many foreign firms has diminished."

Nevertheless, Kalicki argued the GCC countries and the United States "can be proud of the progress we have made" to date. Trade between the two regions has totalled over \$27 billion in 1997, up from \$9 billion in 1985. More importantly, U.S. investments in the GCC countries were put at more than \$5 billion and GCC investment in the United States was estimated at \$3 billion.

He also checked off several achievements in various policy areas:

— Each country now has laws in the books or in draft to protect copyrights, trademarks and patents but "more is needed, especially in the area of enforcement."

— Unlike previous times when all the GCC countries required majority local ownership of

investment projects, the United Arab Emirates now allows 100 per cent foreign ownership in the free zones, and similarly Bahrain in "certain" sectors. "We are even negotiating a bilateral investment treaty with Bahrain,"

— Oman and Bahrain have changed their commercial laws which, as in the case of other GCC states, restricted foreign companies' relationship with their local representatives, allowing non-exclusive agents.

— Short-term visas have given way to multi-year and multiple entry visas in the entire region except Saudi Arabia.

Yet Kalicki underlined that "it is still crucial that we find ways to foster economic diversification, growth and job creation."

The GCC region, according to Kalicki "is at the stage in its economic evolution for a more central, advisory role for both of our business communities as the governments confer on policy issues" which should meet the region's urgency "to diversify its economies as a principal means of job creation and economic growth."

He expressed hope that at the next Dialogue session "our private sectors will be more fully involved in our discussions and will offer their ideas on how we can attain our shared goals of increasing trade and investment between, and accelerating growth in, the nations of the GCC and the United States."

The highlight of the joint statement issued September 24 after their deliberations here was the recognition that "important progress towards economic integration" has been achieved within the GCC region, as in the commitment to a customs

union by the year 2001, the development of an integrated power grid for the region and the opening of commercial bank branches.

The joint statement issued after Crown Prince Abdullah's visit had scant references to economic issues other than to repeat U.S. recognition of Saudi Arabia's importance in the world oil market and "as a secure and reliable supplier of energy reserves, especially to the United States."

The two sides agreed "on the need to continue cooperation to enhance trade and investment between the two countries."

It was apparently left to the Crown Prince and his finance minister to make their pitch to the eager American business community which is hoping that the Kingdom will open its huge energy sector for foreign investment. In 1977 the U.S. reportedly accounted for 22 per cent of total Saudi imports.

"Friends, the investment opportunities in Saudi Arabia are varied and promising," the Crown Prince told the dinner audience without elaboration. "The investment environment is also suitable for strengthening the cooperation between Saudi and American businesses."

Indicating that his country is ready to reconsider some of its business practices, he added, "The world today is full of changes and one who does not realise this fact and make it one of his priorities toward his nation and in his deals with others, he will be left behind."

He assured the businessmen that they will be welcome "as friends and investors contributing together to achieve the mutual interest of all parties. We assure you that we will help and support you."



Rami G. Khouri  
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Features

In Iran-Taleban standoff, the stakes are high

Amin Saikal is director of the Center for Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra.

TENSIONS IN Afghanistan have recently assumed a wider and more dangerous regional dimension. While a meeting at the United Nations in New York this week of the United States, China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, and three central Asian states was intended to prevent foreign intervention in the Afghan civil war, it has not ended the risk that the conflict will spread. Alarmed by the ruling Taleban militia's push into restive territory in northern Afghanistan last month, and the killing of eight Iranian diplomats and the reported mas-

sacre of thousands of Shiites there, Iran has put 270,000 regular troops and Revolutionary Guards on the border with Afghanistan and will soon begin manoeuvres. The reported massacre by the Sunni Islamic militia has put enormous pressure on Iran, where the Shiite sect of Islam dominates, to do something about protecting their brethren. About 20 per cent of Afghanistan's population is Shiite. The eight-nation initiative agreed to at the New York meeting, includes a plan to send a special envoy to promote negotiations on forming a broad-based government in Kabul. President Mohammed Khatami of Iran finds this an acceptable diplomatic move. But Mr. Khatami, who must contend with powerful hard-liners in Tehran, also contends that "the very existence of the Taleban is dangerous in

the region." That sentiment is shared by Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbours, as well as Russia. Should open military conflict erupt between Iran and the Taleban, the stakes will be high, and no state bears more responsibility for the consequences than Pakistan. The Iranian leadership is convinced that Pakistan has gone too far in its support of the Taleban. Although Islamabad has only admitted to the presence of "Pakistani volunteers" fighting alongside the Taleban, the Taleban could not survive for long because Pakistan could incapacitate the militia by cutting off its fuel supply. Tehran is further alarmed that Pakistan, despite its stated willingness to sign a treaty banning nuclear testing, might try to use its nuclear clout to pursue regional expansion.

Tehran is troubled, too, that a regional Arab rival, Saudi Arabia, has bankrolled the Taleban, and that Washington has remained uncharacteristically quiet on the reports of ethnic massacres and the Taleban's transformation of southern Afghanistan into a thriving base for poppy growing, drug trafficking and heroin production. Tehran also sees, in the Islamist force on its border, collusion by the United States, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia on the American policy of containing Iran. Under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, Iran would be justified in moving against the Taleban over the murder of the diplomats; they were staffing the Iranian Consulate with the approval of the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani, who is recognised by the U.N. but was deposed by the Taleban. Iran may have calculated that, inside

Afghanistan, the Taleban is resented not only by non-Pashtun ethnic groups but also by many of the tribally divided Pashtuns who reject Pakistani patronage. Iran could also count on for approval the Central Asian republics, Russia and India, as well as the U.N. Security Council's recent rebuke of the militia. Even the United States would find it difficult to act against Iran, given its own missile strikes in Afghanistan against a suspected terrorist that the Taleban is protecting. Pakistan's power to respond to Iran is constrained by its own bankruptcy and the collapse of its internal structures, as well as its preoccupation of guarding its border with India. Pakistan is friendless in the region — and has only itself to blame.

— The International Herald Tribune.

Environment

Oil spill off Niger delta spurns clamour for compensation

By Roger Cohen

DENNY SANSOM of Mobil Oil has the ocean behind him. 7 million restive Nigerians of the Niger River delta in front of him, huge reserves of oil beneath him and hundreds of thousands of angry complaints against his corporation threatening to sink him. The trouble began on Jan. 12, he recalled. Mr. Sansom, a Texan, who is Mobil's operations manager, walked into a staff meeting and was told that despite full production at Mobil's 57 offshore wells, oil was not reaching shore. "Shut it down!" he bellowed. "Shut everything!"

The order came too late. A 60 centimetre underwater pipeline from Mobil's Idaho production platform 5.5 kilometres offshore had snapped. Flying 26 miles out over the Atlantic in a helicopter that afternoon, Mr. Sansom saw 26 miles of oil. "The slick was moving like a giant ship," he said. Along the Nigerian coast, the spilled oil has now become a subject of vehement dispute, a catalyst for pent-up claims fed by poverty and state neglect. In few places on earth do the West's richest corporations and millions of the world's poorest people rub shoulders with such intensity or such potentially explosive consequences as in the Niger delta, the fifth-largest source of America's imported fuel.

"Things are very turbulent," said Ernest Ukocho, a community leader in the villages surrounding Mobil's operations at Eket. "We are trying to maintain calm, but there has been some rioting. The fact is, everyone wants a piece of the Mobil cake." The oil — 40,000 barrels of it, or roughly one-sixth of the giant Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska — drifted west, thus avoiding nearby Cameroonian waters to the east and an international fiasco. The fiercely secretive former Nigerian regime of General Sani Abacha, who died in June, also helped keep the Mobil spill largely out of the news.

But in the Niger delta everyone quickly knew of it. Mr. Sansom has been held hostage, repeatedly rebuked and now spends 70 per cent of his time on "community issues" — essentially trying to stop resentment from turning to rioting. As Nigeria approaches a delicate transition from military rule to democracy, the delta's long-festering problems pose the threat of widespread violence. In the wetlands, the world's largest mangrove swamp, unrest seems close to boiling over, with sabotage against pipelines becoming routine and intermittent acts of violence.

The spill — dwarfing those caused by sabotage — made Mr. Sansom's position doubly difficult. Scientific evidence shows that environmental damage was slight. But for people long subjected to the stunted development apparently willed on the delta by Nigerian military governments, that spilled oil was a bonanza beckoning. "I understand these people," Mr. Sansom said. "They're poor. So they think we're all Howard Hughes. One Saturday morning alone, I had \$4.5 billion in claims — that's 45 per cent of the total oil revenue of the country."

Since oil was discovered here 42 years ago by Royal Dutch/Shell, enormous wealth has been taken from the area by Mobil, Chevron, Shell, Texaco and other Western companies, and by Nigeria's generals, who have ruled for 28 of the last 32 years. But, as a result of apparently gross neglect by the military government that takes the bulk of the oil revenue, life for the people living in the wetlands has scarcely improved. When the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa had the temerity to

point this out, demanding compensation on the grounds that the entire region, and his Ogoni people, remained poor, Nigeria's generals hanged him in 1993. The pretext was a flimsy charge of involvement in a murder, upheld by a kangaroo court of military officers. The real issue was — and remains — where and how the more than \$10 billion Nigeria receives annually from oil is invested. President Bill Clinton and other Western leaders expressed indignation at Mr. Saro-Wiwa's execution, although not enough to impose oil sanctions on Nigeria, where U.S. investment totals \$7 billion. Three years later, the 7 million delta people still appear mired in a paralysing web. Among them are the and several large minority ethnic groups: the Ogoni form a small minority of about 500,000.

General Abdulsalam Abubakar, General Abacha's successor, has indicated that he wants reform. He made a conciliatory gesture this month in releasing several Ogoni prisoners. In the absence of state investment — Nigerian authorities have built no schools for several years — Mobil has effectively become the local government here: the object of all claims, all hope of jobs, money or investment, all aspirations for electricity, or hospitals or running water — and all resentments.

To travel the Eket region — an area of about 260 square kilometres that might reasonably be renamed Mobiland — is to encounter a fantastic array of complaints levelled at the U.S. company: gutters not deep enough; roads and clinics promised but not built; oil-polluted sea waters now allegedly emptied of fish all the way to Cameroon; zinc roofs rusting because of the flares, even doors and walls vibrating from earth tremors allegedly caused by Mobil's activities. More than 60 per cent of the revenue from Mobil's joint venture goes to the government.

In one sense the oil companies are unfairly criticised: the government takes over 70 per cent of Nigeria's oil revenue and could clearly have invested more of it in the delta. But Western companies effectively acquiesced in the region's impoverishment so long as they could pump oil and get their money out: their push for "community development" in recent years may have come too late.

To Western oil interests, generally synonymous with Western political interests, stability has been of paramount importance in Nigeria: The country's oil is ecologically desirable to America because it is unusually sulphur-free and strategically desirable because it represents diversification from Middle Eastern sources. That stability has been preserved at gunpoint. As a result of interethnic tensions, and memories of Biafra's secession in 1967, the generals who have governed Nigeria have sought to keep the delta area poor on the basis that a region with oil and development might be tempted to



Chief Ebitu leads the calls for compensation and says resentment is strong amongst villagers (photo by Roger Cohen)

go it alone again. The then-Republic of Biafra comprised much of the oil-producing region; its independence was quashed in a three-year war.

The oil companies, meanwhile, have long taken the view that their obligations are met by paying taxes and royalties to the authorities. Oil production, not regional development, has been their role.

Although this approach is now changing, the delta still bears heavy scars. Potholed roads, rundown schools and isolated villages without running water dot an area that produces over 90 per cent of Nigeria's hard-currency earnings. Mobil, which produces about a third of Nigeria's total oil output in a joint venture with the state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Co., moved fast as the oil seeped into the ocean.

Enormous interests were at stake: Mobil has more than \$2.5 billion invested in Nigeria; the Ubit offshore platform, pumping 250,000 barrels a day, is the company's largest single production unit. With disaster looming, weather and currents smiled on Mobil. For a long-time the bulk of the oil remained offshore, where warm winds and the light nature of Nigerian crude favoured evaporation. "Between Mother Nature and Mobil's highly effective and targeted response," said David Page, a U.S. oil spill expert, "the shoreline was spared what could have been a very serious environmental event."

But thousands of claims have been pouring in to the U.S. company from Akwa Ibom state, home to Mobil, from Delta state, from Cross River, from Bayelsa, from Lagos. The village of Itafre, a collection of mud-and-brick homes, lies in the midst of the mangrove swamp about 10 miles from Mobil's Eket base. Mobil has built a school here and tried to develop a cashew-nut farm.

But resentment is strong, especially since the spill. Thomas Ebitu, the village chief, acknowledged that Mobil had built his house and the school and started the farm. But why was the village without electricity? And where was the running water that Mobil should provide?

In all, the spill of about \$600,000 worth of oil may cost the company about \$40 million — \$10 million in cleanup and \$30 million to settle the claims.

— International Herald Tribune

Infidelity common among birds and mammals, experts say

By Paul Recer  
Associated Press

INFIDELITY MAY be nature's way, according to studies that show about 10 per cent of birds and mammals that mate for life are actually faithful to their partners. The urges of biology, say the experts, promotes some forms of hanky-panky.

Studies published Friday in the journal Science suggest that animal parents can gain important benefits for their species by mating with those outside a bonded partnership.

Females stray to gather the best possible genes for their offspring, while males are driven to father as many and as often as possible, experts say.

New studies using genetic testing techniques show that even the most apparently devoted of partners often fool around, visiting nearby nests or dens or clans to enjoy the sexual company of strangers. Birds do it, apes do it, and, of course, so do some people.

"True monogamy actually is rare," said Stephen T. Emlen, an expert on evolutionary behaviour at Cornell University. He says there is a great difference between "social monogamy," where mating pairs bond and work together to raise their young, and "genetic monogamy," where parents are faithful sex partners.

Social monogamy is relatively common, but genetic monogamy is the

exception rather than the rule, the studies report.

Emlen said there are only two monkeys — the marmoset and the tamarin — that are truly monogamous among the primates, the animal order that includes man. All the others, monkeys, apes and people, often mate outside their partnerships.

Most primates, in fact, make no pretense of faithfully bonding for life, and it is difficult to know for sure that males actually know which of the young in the clan are their children, he said.

That may even be true for humans. An Oregon study suggested that about 10 per cent of children were not sired by the male partner of the parent couple with whom they bonded.

Among the birds, faithful sex partnership has been thought for years to be widespread. Some species, such as the eastern bluebird, gained reputations as shining examples of devotion.

Male and female partners work together closely to build nests, incubate eggs, then feed and raise their young.

The truth is, bluebirds have a sex life that rivals a television soap opera.

Patricia Adair Gowaty, a behavioural ecologist at the University of Georgia, has found that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of chicks cared for by a bonded pair of bluebirds were not fathered by the male. Gowaty reports that of 180 socially monogamous species, only about 10 per cent are sexually faithful.

Emlen said female birds and mammals that seek sexual partners outside their partnership may be pushed by the biological drive to produce the best possible children.

"One of the patterns is that females seek males of high status and high quality," he said. "By doing so, they are able to produce offspring of higher quality that will be able to do better and survive better. There is a lot of research going on to see if these ideas are correct." Several studies have shown that "females socially bonded with very high quality males do not have copulations outside the pair bonds," said Emlen. In effect, such females believe they already have the best, so why look for better? Males, some researchers suggest, are biologically driven to stray by the desire to spread their genes into as many members of the next generation as possible. Among some species, such as lions, mountain gorillas and grizzly bears, this drive to influence the future genetically leads dominant males to kill and even eat the young of competing males.

Impulses that drive humans to seek sex outside their partnerships are far more complex.

Researchers generally believe that monogamy originated among species whose young survived best when raised by a bonded pair.

This may have led to the rise of monogamy among people. Since human children take so long to mature, it

Grizzlies pushed 'towards extinction'

By Michael McCarthy

THE GRIZZLY bear, symbol of North America's wilderness, is under severe threat in one of its heartland habitats, a report said yesterday.

It is being hunted in the Canadian province of British Columbia in a way that will put it on the road to extinction, says the Environmental Investigation Agency. The London-based group says the British Columbia government regards grizzlies as a species to be hunted, yet has no idea how many there are in the province.

Its estimate of 10,000 to 13,000 may be a 300 or 400 per cent overestimate and with unreported kills by poachers the population is likely to be dwindling faster than the bears can reproduce, says the agency.

The forest habitat is also under continual widespread assault from clear-cut logging, road-building, mining and other industrial developments.

The agency has a track record in highlighting early warning signals of major declines in important species. It provided much of the evidence of large-scale ivory poaching, which led to the 1989 ban on commercial trade to try to save the African

elephant.

Now it wants an immediate moratorium on trophy-hunting of grizzlies while a long-term review of the population is done and protected areas set up.

"The government of British Columbia is clinging to a dangerous and irresponsible policy in the face of overwhelming evidence that these magnificent creatures are in dramatic and possibly irreversible decline," says the agency chairman, Allan Thornton, himself from British Columbia.

The grizzly is a North American subspecies of the brown bear, *Ursus arctos*, which is found around the world, but the *Ursus arctos horribilis* is bigger, stronger and fiercer. Grizzlies, named for the white tinge on the fur, can stand seven feet tall, weigh 850lb and kill a steer with one blow of a paw. They occasionally attack and kill people.

Once they roamed from Alaska to Mexico but that range shrank drastically in the last century. They died out in California, which has the grizzly on its state flag, in 1925.

The animals are now concentrated in Alaska and western Canada, British Columbia's huge ancient forests holding up to a

quarter of the grizzlies in North America. It is their very wildness that attracts hunters, and they are the most prized American hunting trophy.

The British Columbia government issues 350 licences a year to kill grizzlies, but the agency says its method of estimating the population is "hopelessly flawed" without an attempt to actually count the animals. The agency estimates that for every two bears killed legally, at least one is killed illegally as a trophy or to supply the trade in bear parts used in traditional Chinese medicine. Still more are killed as "wounding losses" (shot animals that retreat into the forest to die unreported) and in road accidents.

"British Columbia is placing the demands of a small pothunting lobby above conservation and biodiversity, which as a Canadian I find shocking and outrageous," says Thornton.

"The BC government and its federal counterpart in Ottawa must act now to protect the grizzly bear, before it is too late." Last night the British Columbia government in Victoria could not comment on the agency's report.

— The Independent



A grizzly on the Pacific coast, endangered by hunters, poachers, varies its diet by digging up clams and other shellfish (photo by James Balog)

LETTERS

Freedom of speech for...

To the editor:

THE BRITISH...

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## Privatisation to fuel Asia despite competition for funds — experts

SINGAPORE (AFP) — A feverish pace of privatisation in Asia has not been halted by economic difficulties but the region will have to compete harder for investment capital, experts at a World Bank-sponsored conference have said.

"The economic turmoil has heightened financial pressures on governments and, therefore, one of the key drivers of privatisation — proceeds maximisation — is now very much in focus Asia-wide," the chairman of Dutch bank ABN-AMRO Asia Corporate Finance Ltd., Richard Orders, said.

But the regional economic crisis triggered by rapid currency depreciations since mid-1997 had forced governments to market their privatisation bids more aggressively because of competition from eastern Europe and Latin America.

"Price and quality are now much more in emphasis than they were before," Orders told

reporters on the sidelines of the World Bank-Asia-Pacific Privatisation Network (APN) Convention.

The APN, established by the World Bank in 1995, is an informal association of ministers and other senior officials charged with implementing privatisation plans in Asia.

Orders said that potential investors in privatisation exercises would scrutinise the region's regulatory environment, quality of management and market position of companies much more closely than before.

"Price and quality are now much more in emphasis than they were before," said Orders, whose bank raises funds for private infrastructure in Asia.

The manager of the World Bank's privatisation services group, Kevin Young, told AFP that Asian economies were "pushing very hard" to expand privatisation programmes.

"I don't know of any country that is reducing the

programme because of the turmoil," he said, citing Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea — the worst affected by the crisis — to be among the most keen in privatisation.

Young said that China and India, which have probably the largest number of state sectors left in the world, had also proposed expansion of their privatisation programmes.

"What Asian governments are seeing is that privatisation is the kind of reform they need to get out of their difficulties — this is part of the solution not part of the problem," he said.

Young said the "two very big issues" facing privatisation in Asia were how to deal with labour in state enterprises farmed out to the private sector, and how to market privatisation exercises more effectively.

Last year, the World Bank estimated that about \$13 billion worth of state enterprises were privatised in Asia, with a large portion in China.

"I think the trend is up so far this year," Young said. Loodon-based publication Privatisation International said in a report circulated at the conference that on a global scale, private investment in infrastructure was estimated at approximately \$60 billion a year.

It said that power and telecoms dominated private infrastructure investment, followed by transport and then water and waste projects.

Orders of ABN-AMRO Bank said initial public offers (IPOs) would be the main driver of privatisation in Asia but trade sales — in which governments allow strategic stakes in key industries to go to particular investors — would gain momentum because of the regional economic crisis.

"I think the key today to getting successful privatisation is getting anchor investors because markets are difficult and you need anchor investors whether they are institutional or strategic," he said.

## Premier to attend meeting of traders in Karak

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh will Wednesday attend the meetings of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce which will be held in Karak.

Federation President Haydar Murad said the attendance of the prime minister will give added support to the federation, stressing that Tarawneh's approval to attend the meeting is a gesture towards boosting economic activities, ending the stagnation and enhancing investments as well as finding solutions to economic issues.

Murad said the federation convenes every three months in one of the cities to discuss economic issues.

Murad said the meeting comes after the government secured the vote of confidence from the Lower House. "That means the government can start implementing its economic reform programme to solve the problems facing the Jordanian economy," he added.

Murad voiced his confidence that the coming era will witness further openness and transparency between the government and the private sector. He called on the government to issue legislations and regulations to promote investments.

He stressed that the federation is exerting efforts to boost relations with other Arab countries in trade and economic fields.

## REUTERS • REUTERS •

### The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NTD	SGD
US Dollar	-	1.6742	0.8883	1.3867	135.50	1.5106	1666.00	1.8888	6.6117
DE Mark	0.8973	-	0.3499	0.8283	90.84	0.9019	968.47	1.1274	3.3827
GB Sterling	1.7057	2.8845	-	2.3637	231.10	2.5766	2822.11	3.2175	9.8891
CH Franc	0.7217	120.82	0.4225	-	97.88	1.0896	1193.00	138.25	4.1396
JP Yen	0.0074	1.2381	0.4324	1.0223	-	1.1144	12.20	138.25	4.1396
CA Dollar	0.6820	1.1100	0.3888	0.9172	1.11	-	1098.68	1.2818	3.7172
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0140	0.3638	0.8587	132.64	0.9134	-	41.40	1.3386
NL Guilder	0.5300	88.68	0.3104	73.40	71.74	0.8001	375.57	-	2.9716
FR Franc	0.1782	0.2982	0.1044	24.6907	24.12	0.2691	33.63	33.6300	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LYB	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7608	0.3770	3.6400	0.3036	3.6728	1008.00	3.4025
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	8.2898	0.8317	5.1340	0.4282	5.1803	2124.12	4.7980
Saudi Riyal	0.2686	0.1890	-	0.1006	0.97	0.8089	0.88	401.55	0.9072
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	1.8807	9.9488	-	9.86	0.8083	0.74	3984.91	9.0289
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	-	0.8634	1.01	413.74	0.9347	0.9347
Kuwait Dinar	3.2938	2.3383	12.3534	1.2417	11.89	-	12.10	4960.47	0.9347
Emirate Dinar	1.2722	0.1830	1.3212	0.1028	0.9911	0.8827	-	410.04	0.9347
Lebanese 1000	0.86	0.4706	2.4904	0.2603	2.4170	0.2016	2.4388	-	2.2503
Egyptian	0.2939	0.2084	1.1023	0.1108	1.0898	0.0892	1.0794	442.62	-

Energy		
Oil	Last	Netloc
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	16.55	16.76
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	14.04	14.23
UL Gas	137.00	139.00

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NTD	SGD
SA Riyal	0.2686	0.4485	0.1532	0.36974	36.1416	-	-	-	-
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.45806	0.15962	0.37758	38.9058	-	-	-	-
KW Dinar	3.2938	6.61672	1.93067	4.5893	446.429	-	-	-	-
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.44247	1.58821	3.67782	398.593	-	-	-	-
CY Pound	2.0151	3.3723	1.1808	2.7912	272.935	-	-	-	-

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	294.2	294.7
Silver (oz's)	6.22	6.25
Platinum (oz's)	380.5	382.5
AL (3 Months)	1343	1344
CU (3 Months)	1680	1684
Zinc (3 Months)	982	984
Lead (3 Months)	527	528
Ni (3 Months)	4080	4085

Libor Fixing				
Currency	Month	Months	Months	Year
USD	6.3780	6.3125	6.2800	6.0625
GBP	7.4786	7.3711	7.2148	6.9375
JPY	0.4870	0.4727	0.4844	0.4844
DEM	3.4688	3.6000	3.5625	3.5889
FRF	3.8000	1.4844	1.6250	1.6014
CHF	1.4141	3.5313	3.5723	3.8016
ITL	4.9700	4.7970	4.2970	-

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/b's)	106.5	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1932	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	216.2	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	105	Spot
Soya (c/b's)	24.98	Spot
Tea (stk/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.2014	1.2074	
DE Mark	0.4207	0.4228	
CH Franc	0.6108	0.6134	
FR Franc	0.1285	0.1281	
JP Yen	0.5203	0.5229	
NL Guilder	0.373	0.3749	
IT Lira	0.4256	0.4277	

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

## Europe is immune to global economic virus — Eurobank chief

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Europe's single currency zone will prove immune to the virulent economic viruses currently circulating around the globe, the man who will run the euro has predicted.

The President of the European Central Bank (ECB), Wim Duisenberg, said that the crisis would slow growth in the 11 euro countries but only marginally.

Earlier, in Bonn, Duisenberg had told the Die Welt newspaper that instability on financial markets, which was driving investors to seek refuge in German bonds, pushing bond yields down to record low points, would not obstruct convergence of interest rates in the euro zone.

He told the newspaper that "the ECB, but not the bank alone, will do whatever is necessary to ensure this...Convergence will occur as it must. The difference between rates will disappear."

In Brussels he told the European Parliament's monetary committee that events in Asia and Russia,

and the volatility of world stock markets, would have "a dampening effect in the euro area."

However, in comments that will further dampen hopes of coordinated interest rate cuts by the leading economic powers throughout the world, he insisted: "We do not see a recession coming."

The ECB, which became operational in July, will be responsible for setting one interest rate for the entire euro-zone from Jan. 1.

Before the various crises emerged, the 11 euro countries were looking forward to growth of more than three per cent in 1999. That was no longer likely, but growth would be only a few decimal points lower, Duisenberg said.

"Please don't panic yet," he said. "There will be some slowing down but, there will be growth."

The ECB's optimistic view that the euro-zone can comfortably weather the shockwaves emanating from the current turmoil is not shared by increasingly pessimistic private sector economists.

They have moved over the last month sharply to reduce their 1999 growth forecasts for the euro zone from a figure averaging about 3.2 per cent to one closer to 2.6 per cent.

In particular, analysts have identified the recent depreciation of the dollar as a potentially major source of pain for European exporters over the next year to 18 months.

EU Finance Commissioner Yves Thibault de Silguy acknowledged that a fall of eight per cent by the dollar against the German mark over the last month was a major source of uncertainty in the final countdown to the launch of the euro, on Jan. 1.

Those who argue that the euro will be a pole of stability in an increasingly turbulent world however can point to the recent volatility of the Danish krona in support of their analysis.

The Danish Central Bank has had to raise interest rates and repeatedly intervene in the markets over the last two years in an effort to resist a sharp slide in the currency against the mark.

The weakness has been widely seen as punishment for Denmark's decision to stay out of the first wave of countries adopting the euro.

The currencies which will be merged into the euro on Jan. 1 — those of Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain — have so far barely moved in reaction to events in Asia and Russia.

## EFAMOL product range launched in Jordan

A DYSLIC child becomes more concentrated, and makes significant improvements in the classroom. A young woman does not feel as irritable during her monthly cycle. A middle-aged businessman finds his days are more productive because he no longer wakes up several times a night to ease his enlarged prostate. And a woman in her fifties counters the threat of osteoporosis by ensuring more calcium reaches her bones.

All four had different problems, but they found a similar solution — they increased their intake of essential fatty acids. These compounds are vital to the

functioning of the billions of cells in every human body, and are involved in important areas as the eyes, brain, heart, joints, skin and the reproductive system. Essential Fatty Acids cannot be made by the body, and so must be taken from one's diet. But various factors — excessive smoking, consumption of alcohol and saturated fats, as well as ageing, stress and certain common diseases — can inhibit one's ability to absorb.

Fatty acids consumed in the diet are converted by the body into the active substance: Gamma Linolenic Acid (GLA). One of the purest forms of GLA is the Evening Primrose plant,

grown in temperate climates around the world. Research has shown that when mixed in combination with other components, such as fish oil or thyme oil, GLA can help maintain one's health and have a considerable impact on various ailments.

Much of the pioneering research into the benefits of essential fatty acids has been done by Efamol. Based in the U.K. and Canada, Efamol is the world's leading manufacturer in the GLA sector, and markets its products in more than 40 countries. The Vitamin and Mineral Supplement industry is growing rapidly around the world under a

growing demand for natural remedies. Efamol now hopes to increase awareness in the Middle East, and towards this aim, has opened a regional office in Amman.

"We chose Jordan as our regional base because we see it as the emerging centre for pharmaceuticals in the Middle East," said Adam Kelliher, the regional manager.

"Geographically, Amman is a perfect location for travel to other parts of the Arab World. But we are also very optimistic about our prospects in the Kingdom itself. Jordanians are very well-informed about the latest developments in healthcare,

and we think will appreciate the obvious benefits of this range."

The Efamol range is the result of years of research and development into mainstream pharmaceuticals. But these products are not drugs, even though they are made to the highest pharmaceutical standards. All of the ingredients are natural, and there are no side effects. The capsules can be purchased without prescription at any leading pharmacy for about 10.5 dinars, with the exception of Efaprost, which has costlier ingredients. The final product range is aimed at specific problems, and most of the combinations are unique and patented.

### THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- More novel
- Andes autocrat
- Coagulate
- Barcolata tune
- "Maria"
- Weaving machine
- Mystique
- Buena
- Line from "The Terminator"
- Regardless, briefly
- Goodbye in Rome
- Mattress
- Mother of nursery rhyme
- Make a road
- Pitcher's error
- Spinosa or Arnold
- Umpire
- Chagall and Connolly
- Sultry West
- Star State
- Put up a sickle
- Church recess
- Wapiti
- Carmichael of "Stardust" fame
- Shool
- Cowards
- Ditty
- Hastens
- West African country
- Flattens on impact
- Telephone
- Vane dir.
- Line from "Casablanca"
- Maxim
- First-class
- Enlarge a hole
- Byelorussian capital
- Ship's pole
- Desires
- William and Brad

DOWN

- Below, poetically
- Benefactor Yale
- Line from "Bonnie and Clyde"
- Chemical suffix
- Scamps
- Homeric epic
- contendere
- Row's opp.
- Atmosphere
- Telegraphed
- Hawaiian feast
- Gobline
- Seize
- Phides
- Vex
- Summoned, old-style
- Poet Shelley
- Hair over the forehead
- Line from "Lunar"
- Spanish house
- Abound (with)
- Luge
- Soft drink flavor
- Alcoholic honey beverages
- Woods management
- Skin problem
- Part of Hispaniola
- Tanning light
- "Casey at the Bat" author
- Part of AT&T
- Emma, the actress
- Arduity
- Onions' kin
- Health resorts
- Drop heavily
- Turner of "Madame X"
- "Misery" star
- Behold
- 502 to Cato

### Peanuts



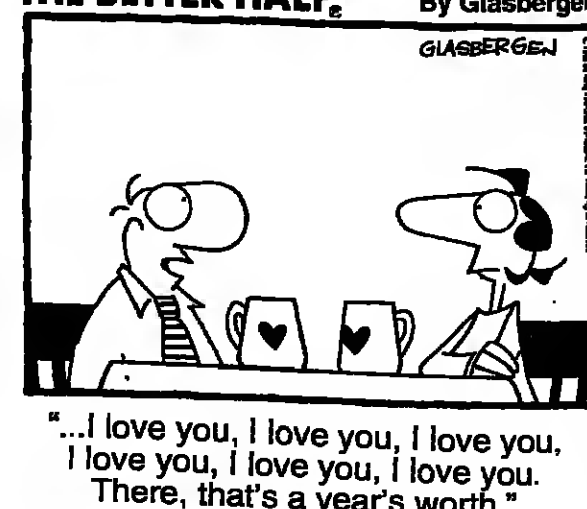
### Andy Capp



### Mutt'n' Jeff



### THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



### JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NASDY

ACEEP

TIPMER

GUFNSU

Now I can finish my work

AN IRON BECOMES THIS TO A NEW TAILOR

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MAIZE DICED HAUNCH OBTUSE  
Answer: A trapeze artist can do this with a computer — USE THE NET



## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Private sector seen needed to help local councils administer income-generating projects

**ACCORDING TO** a study prepared by a "local councils committee" at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, the Cities and Villages Development Bank suffers from a shortage of trained and qualified personnel in financial and administrative spheres. "It is hoped that a Royal Decree approving new regulations regarding the bank's employees would attract qualified staff from the local banking market," the study said.

The study indicated that many negative aspects have hindered the bank's activities and limited its capabilities to extend the necessary funds to the local councils over the past years. Among the main hindrances was the continued financing of income-generating projects which, when evaluated were found to be mostly floundering.

Such a situation, forced the councils to seek loans to cover obligations. Consequently, that raised the indebtedness to JD55 million in addition to JD22 million in expected interest on the amount mentioned. "As such, the bank sees it is necessary to have the private sector participate in managing the income-generating projects of the local councils."

Khaled Tarawneh, the regional planning director at the ministry at the committee's rapporteur, urged speeding up the implementation of the ministry's plan that aim at merging municipalities to be around 50 large ones. This step would contribute to improving services provided to the citizens and also to narrow the budget deficits to a great extent. Furthermore, "the merger would enable the large municipalities to benefit from what is known as the economies of scale (Al Dustour)."

### Expansion of Aqaba port estimated to cost \$95m

**THE EXPANSION** of the Aqaba port will be carried out at a cost of \$95 million and the enlargement will include setting up an industrial wharf at a cost of \$50 million. In addition, the expansion will cover developing other wharfs to enable them to receive large vessels. Ports Corporation Director General Mohammad Dalabih has said. "Such an expansion will increase the capability of Aqaba port to strongly compete with Israeli, Syrian and Egyptian ports."

Captain Dalabih said the corporation has secured a \$25 million loan from a European bank to finance the infrastructure of the industrial wharf project. He added that negotiations between the corporation and the potash and phosphate companies could lead to the rest of the financing.

The corporation's head said negotiations are under way with donors and lenders to finance the emigrants' wharf which will be carried out during 1998/1999.

According to Dalabih, unloading and handling at the port of Aqaba now reaches between 10,000 tonnes and 12,000 tonnes a day. He revealed that the corporation's annual earnings amount to around JD40 million and that it provides the treasury with no less than JD15 million a year.

Captain Dalabih estimated the annual volume of goods handled annually at 12.3 million tonnes of which 7.5 million tonnes are phosphate, potash and fertiliser exports. More than 5,000 workers are employed by the corporation (Al Ra'i).

### Saudi stocks join IFC's emerging markets

**RIYADH (AFP)** — The twenty most actively traded stocks on the Saudi stock exchange — the largest in the Arab World — have joined the International Finance Corporation's (IFC's) emerging markets index, Saudi officials announced.

The move is the first part of a strategy designed to open the country up to foreign investment. Finance Minister Ibrahim Ben Abdul Aziz Al Assaf told the official news agency SPA.

He said investment funds would soon be established on the Riyadh exchange which would be open to foreigners.

Currently non-Saudis can only invest in the exchange through a closed investment fund set up by the Saudi American Bank in 1997.

Riyadh decided to list its stock exchange with the International Finance Corporation — a branch of the World Bank — in April.

The Saudi authorities have been keen to diversify their economy away from dependence on oil, at a time when a sharp decline in its price on international markets has played havoc with government revenues.

### Prices lowered on Chinese rice, aircraft fuel

**AMMAN (J.T.)** — The Ministry of Supply Sunday reduced the selling price of Chinese rice, barley, fodder and aircraft fuel, Al Ra'i newspaper said.

It approved lowering the selling price of the Chinese rice by JD50 per tonne, barley and fodder by JD5 per tonne and aircraft fuel by 20-30 fils per litre.

The ministry's acting secretary general, Ahmad Assaf, said citizens will find tangible drop in the selling price of the Chinese rice.

Assaf indicated that the old price of Chinese rice was 250 fils per kilogramme while the new price will be about 200 fils.

### World Trade Centre to be privatised

**NEW YORK (AFP)** — The World Trade Centre, the largest office complex in the world, will be privatised under a 99-year lease arrangement, New York State Governor George Pataki has announced.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, a public agency which built the 110-storey twin towers in 1970, could receive up to \$1.5 billion in the deal.

The authority, which manages bridges and tunnels between New York and New Jersey, will invite offers from property developers in the next two months and expects it to be awarded by summer 1999.

Pataki, who is co-president of the authority, said: "The privatisation of the World Trade Centre (WTC) crowns the down-

town renaissance of Manhattan." The WTC is the largest office space in the world at nearly one million square metres (10 million square feet) and accounts for 20 per cent of Manhattan's prime office space.

It gained worldwide notoriety in 1993 when a terrorist bomb attack damaged one of its famous twin towers, but occupation rate is currently 94 per cent.

However, city politicians are threatening to resist the move in a dispute over the WTC's lucrative tax revenue.

New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, an outspoken critic of the Port Authority, has been calling for the WTC to be sold for some time.

He said he would oppose the decision to

grant a long lease without officially changing the building's ownership, unless the bulk of the property taxes were paid to New York City.

These tax revenues are estimated at \$150 million per year, according to Charles Gargano, Port Authority vice president.

But New York City only receives \$25 million a year in property dues from the Port Authority.

The complex, which occupies six hectares (16 acres) in lower Manhattan, provides office space for more than 400 firms, employing 50,000 people.

In addition to the famous twin towers, the highest in New York at 375 metres (1,238 feet), it comprises two nine-storey buildings and a series of low-level commercial buildings.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 28/09/1998											
PAST 12 MONTHS		COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JO	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW										
355,500	170,000	ARAB BANK	17.7	93	52	11110	241510	219.00	216.00	3.00	-
1,960	1,610	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.0	4.38	15	6279	10055	1.61	1.60	0.01	-
3,200	1,000	BANK OF JORDAN	10.2	0.00	2	4857	4906	1.01	1.01	-	-
1,300	870	MID-EAST INV. BK.	59.8	0.00	12	28950	26215	93	91	0.02	-
6,510	2,610	THE HOUSING BK.	18.3	3.46	20	20350	59054	2,90	2,89	0.01	-
870	560	JOR. CILP BANK	17.8	0.00	8	14000	8120	58	58	0.00	-
3,910	1,690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.8	0.00	10	3321	5433	1,77	1,74	0.03	-
1,260	930	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	1	200	200	95	1,00	0.05	+
3,900	1,350	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	21.8	3.52	3	4000	584	1,40	1,42	0.02	+
970	720	BEIT-AL-HAL (REITSA)	3.6	0.00	5	1150	830	72	74	0.02	+
850	600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	15	53725	36703	69	68	0.01	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 283.91 CHNG: -1.16											
2,850	1,760	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.3	9.51	7	1400	3672	2.61	2.63	0.02	+
2,100	1,080	HOLY LAND INSUR.	8.2	0.00	2	550	605	1.10	1.10	-	-
2,350	1,600	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	9.5	0.00	3	10300	20341	1.98	1.98	-	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 126.34 CHNG: +0.09											
2,248	1,430	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.5	5.65	6	1750	2554	1.45	1.46	0.01	+
1,010	1,650	IRBID ELECTRICITY	10.4	5.95	2	350	588	1.77	1.68	0.09	-
1,360	740	NATL. PORTFOLIO	29.1	0.00	8	4850	3546	74	73	0.01	-
9,500	5,100	ALJAL	8.4	7.31	1	30	274	5,50	5,47	0.03	-
3,240	1,040	MID-EAST HOTELS	9	1.05	1	200	273	1.09	1.09	0.00	-
4,600	1,880	JAR. INTL. INV. EDIC.	9.6	2.07	2	500	965	1.93	1.93	-	-
1,000	890	TARSA EDUCATION	20.3	0.00	3	2500	2200	89	88	0.01	-
1,330	1,040	UNIFIN CO.	5.0	9.65	1	500	570	1.15	1.14	0.01	-
810	510	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	2	1100	562	51	52	0.01	+
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 106.42 CHNG: 0.00											
3,880	1,840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.1	5.85	15	8166	15419	1.90	1.88	0.02	-
4,120	1,490	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	15.8	0.00	1	250	373	1.49	1.49	-	-
11,250	10,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.2	8.45	3	120	1262	10.52	10.52	-	-
5,950	4,450	JORDAN TUNING	7.8	8.25	2	225	1091	4.85	4.85	-	-
1,450	1,040	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	67.9	0.00	2	500	573	1.14	1.15	0.01	+
5,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. PHAR.	7.4	2.80	10	7291	7291	2,70	2,68	0.02	-
5,490	1,080	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	4.7	3.35	10	3750	4035	1.08	1.07	0.01	-
1,440	1,020	JOR. PIPES MANFACT.	8.9	9.26	5	1150	1242	1.09	1.08	0.01	-
8,540	6,500	ARAB CHM. DISTRIB.	7.7	7.25	1	200	1380	6,95	6,90	0.05	+
3,480	1,040	JAR. ALUMIN. IND.	6.5	6.51	50	269	269	538	538	0.00	-
2,980	1,700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	12.9	14.29	3	527	920	1,73	1,75	0.02	+
570	390	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	13.2	0.00	5	18000	7170	39	39	-	-
900	370	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	5	1800	784	43	43	0.00	-
590	300	INTERMED. PETRO. CHM.	9	0.00	33	41200	13289	32	32	-	-
690	320	JOR. NOCERODE IND.	9	0.00	2	350	121	35	35	-	-
1,760	760	UNIV. CHM. IND.	9	7.42	1	250	338	95	95	-	-
730	380	JOR. GOLDFIN-CHEN	7.8	0.00	15	15550	6263	39	39	0.02	+
1,470	1,150	ARAB PHARM. CHM.	13.7	4.84	11	3650	4531	1.25	1.24	0.01	-
1,260	530	UNIV. HOOD. IND.	10.5	7.40	7	2440	1610	56	56	-	-
920	480	JOR. JDS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	4	1200	612	51	51	-	-
1,580	1,200	NATL. CHLORINE	8.7	8.06	3	2750	3400	1.24	1.24	-	-
1,560	1,150	EL-ZAY READY WEAR	44.0	0.00	1	50	63	1,25	1,25	-	-
1,210	810	ELF. TORBOD	7.3	5.61	12	8150	8499	1,04	1,04	-	-
1,220	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	10.0	0.00	2	600	846	91	91	-	-
890	660	JORDAN STEEL	9.6	8.14	4	7100	6106	86	86	-	-
730	580	NATL. ALUMINUM	34.2	0.00	17	15450	10673	69	69	-	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 77.72 CHNG: +0.18											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 171.19 CHNG: -0.87											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 28/09/1998											
1,000	730	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	2	0.00	2	200000	140000	73	70	0.03	-
950	810	AMMAN INSURANCE	2	0.00	1	250	393	81	77	0.04	-
490	210	CERTIFIC. SEC. STORAGE	2	0.00	2	750	133	30	31	0.01	-
800	500	UNION INV.	9	0.00	13	105500	55915	54	53	0.01	-
620	240	ARAB FID. INVEST.	9	0.00	6	2300	575	25	25	0.00	-
2,010	790	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	7.1	0.00	3	711	601	80	81	0.01	-
2,220	1,050	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	2	1000	1090	1.14	1.09	0.05	-
280	090	JOR. TROS. MATCH-JEMCO	9	0.00	20	59150	7695	14	14	-	-
600	270	ARAB FOOD & HED.	9	0.00	6	2809	870	31	31	-	-
430	200	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	27.6	0.00	5	2000	465	23	24	0.01	+
580	260	NATL. MULT. ENG. NAMICO	9	0.00	27	62100	16767	27	27	-	-
1,230	670	READY MIX CONCRETE	7.1	0.00	1	1000	1660	67	66	0.01	-
1,830	560	KIDZART PHARM. 904	6	0.00	3	373	175	56	57	0.01	+
2,160	1,160	UNION TOBACCO 87.51	13.5	5.90	4	8250	16459	2.12	2.12	-	-
350	190	INDS. ENG.	2	0.00	2	1300	693	21	21	-	-
160	70	INDS. CERAMIC	9.2	0.00	1	1000	350	35	35	-	-
950	540	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	2	10250	5843	57	57	-	-
680	430	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	1	10000	5100	51	51	-	-
950	280	OPTICAL HEARING CO.	2	0.00	3	624	213	84	84	-	-
1,310	760	MUTISAD	9	0.00	4	1900	1541	81	82	0.01	+
1,000	690	AL-KHARAL PRINTING CO	10.8	10.67	6	3500	2473	70	71	0.01	+
GRAND TOTAL											
111 476807 257908											



# Kingdom's team returns home as Arab Cup semifinals kick off

By a Staff Reporter

THE SEMIFINAL round of the 7th Arab Cup finals get under way Tuesday with the competition for the title down from 12 to the top four teams participating in the event which concludes in Doha, Qatar, Oct. 1.

The United Arab Emirates face hosts Qatar while Kuwait clash against the Saudis in second round matches where the winners will move to the finals while the losers play for third and fourth places.

The Jordanian team meanwhile arrived home Monday after failing to clinch the sole qualifying berth from Group 1. They were eliminated from the first round of the event losing 2-0 to Qatar and heating Lihiya 2-1.

Jordan's Yugoslav coach was quoted by newspapers as saying "the players lacked the team spirit. The team needs a lot of work, more training and facilities to upgrade its status."

He added that he would present a detailed report to the Jordan Football Association noting that "many things had been changed."

He also noted that many players had disregarded team officials during training and competition and needed to be disciplined.

Jordan's elimination was the sixth time the team failed to get past the first round throughout their seven participations since the championship first kicked off in 1963. The Kingdom achieved the best result in the 5th Cup hosted in Amman in 1988 where Jordan took fourth place.

Jordan has played a total of 23 Arab Cup matches winning only four, drawing in three and losing 16 matches.

To this day, the team scored only 15 goals while allowing 54 in.

Kuwait qualified after a 4-0 win over Syria, and 4-1 over titleholders Egypt. Sudan, playing their inaugural Arab Cup, upset Morocco, but later lost to

the UAE. The Saudis eliminated Lebanon and Algeria.

Egypt, and the rest of North African countries entered their Olympic teams rather than national teams in the competition.

Cash awards set by the Arab Soccer Federation are \$40,000 for the champion, \$30,000 for the runner up, and \$20,000 for the third and fourth-placed teams.

Iraq are the four time titleholders. Tunisia and Egypt have won it once each, while Syria are three time runners-up.

The Jordanian team had training camps in Aqaba, Egypt, and Yugoslavia. The Kingdom's team qualified to the Arab Cup finals after beating Lebanon 2-0, drawing 1-1 with Palestine, and losing to Syria 3-0 in the preliminaries held in Beirut, Lebanon.

## McGwire ends season with 70 home runs

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Even Mark McGwire couldn't believe he hit an incredible 70 homers.

"I've never even thought about it, dreamed about it," he said. "It's absolutely amazing! It blows me away!"

The St. Louis Cardinals' slugger ended his assault on baseball's sacred home run record as mightily as he started it.

He hit his 69th and 70th homers Sunday in his last game, a fitting finale for a year he began with a grand slam homer on opening day.

"This is a season I will never, ever forget, and I hope everybody in baseball never forgets," McGwire told the cheering crowd after the game.

McGwire, who hit five homers on the final weekend, connected against Montreal Expos' rookie Mike Thurman in the third inning Sunday. He homered off Carl Pavano for No. 70 in the seventh.

McGwire moved four ahead of the Chicago Cubs' Sammy Sosa and nine in front of the previous record set by Roger Maris in 1961.

The total distance of McGwire's homers is 29,598 feet, nearly 400 feet higher than the peak -- of Mount Everest.

President Clinton congratulated McGwire and invited the slugger and his son to the White House.

McGwire lofted a 1-1 fastball 377 feet into the left-field seats for No. 69. After stomping on home plate, he took a few slow steps, then made several salutes to the sellout crowd.

Kerry Woodson, a 22-year-old body shop worker from Missouri, wound up with the ball and said he didn't know what he would do with it.

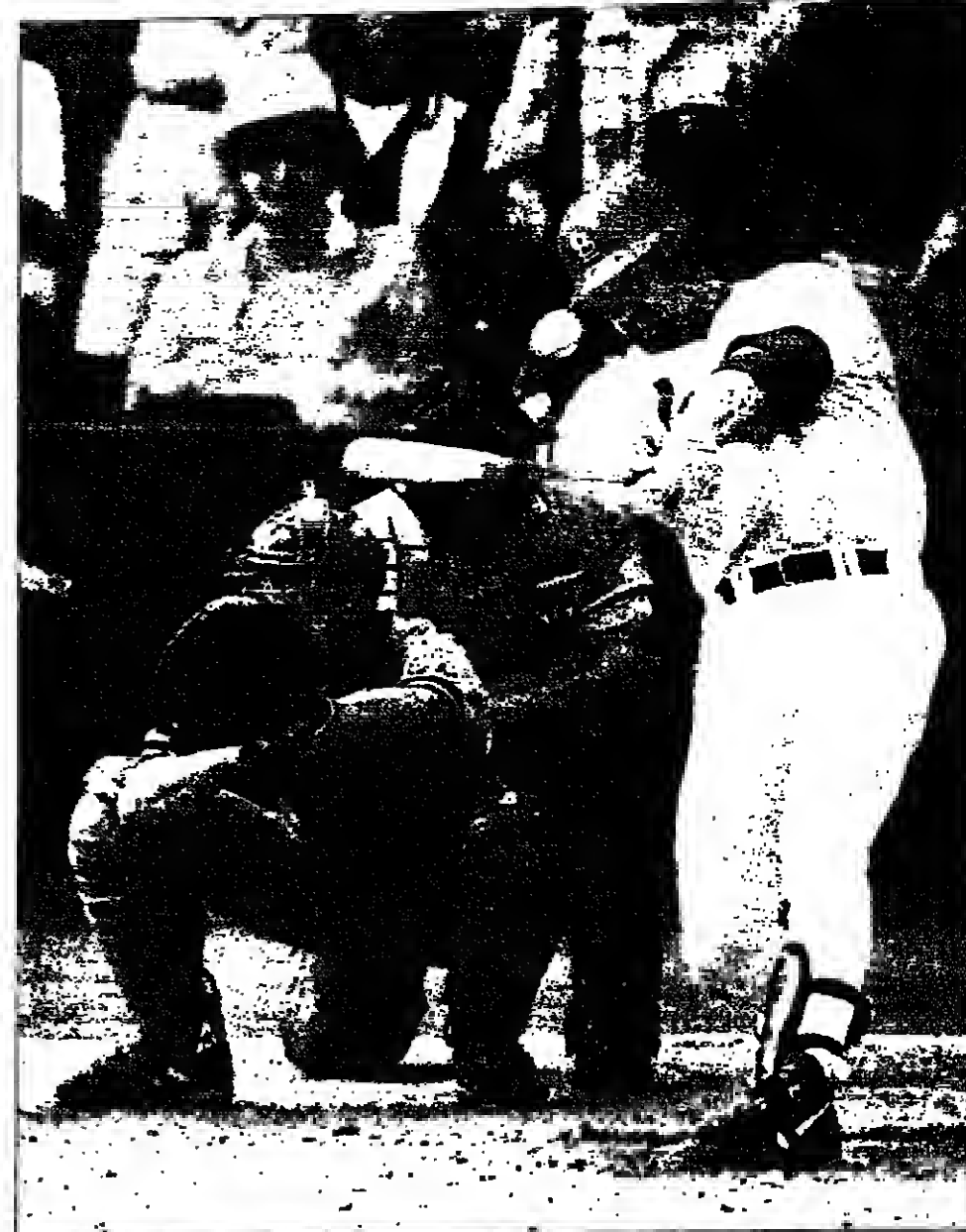
"I reached up, closed my eyes, and it landed in my glove," Woodson said. "It's a dream come true. I hope he doesn't hit any more today."

He didn't get his wish.

With two outs in the seventh and the score 3-3, McGwire lined a first-pitch fastball 370 feet over the left-field wall.

This time, even a curtain call from McGwire didn't quiet the 46,110 fans, who remained on their feet, cheering even as teammate Brian Jordan took a called third strike for the third out of the inning. The Cardinals won the game 6-3.

The second home run ball landed in a party box and was snared by Phil Ozerski of Olivette, Mo., who was attending the game with a group of Washington University



St. Louis Cardinal's Mark McGwire hits his 70th home run in front of Montreal Expos catcher Michael Barrett and umpire Rich Rieker during the seventh inning of their game (Reuters photo)

### Final Major League Standings

#### AMERICAN LEAGUE

##### East Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-Ny Yankees	114	48	.704	-
Y-Boston	92	70	.568	22
Toronto	88	74	.543	26
Baltimore	79	83	.488	35
Tampa Bay	63	99	.389	51

##### Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-Cleveland	89	73	.549	-
White Sox	80	82	.494	9
Kansas City	72	89	.447	16 1/2
Minnesota	70	92	.432	19
Detroit	65	97	.401	24

##### West Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-Texas	88	74	.543	-
Anaheim	85	77	.525	3
Seattle	76	85	.472	11 1/2
Oakland	74	88	.457	14

X — Clinched Division Title

Y — Clinched Wild Card Playoff Berth

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

##### East Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-Atlanta	106	56	.654	-
Ny Mets	88	74	.543	18
Philadelphia	75	87	.463	31
Montreal	65	97	.401	41
Florida	54	108	.333	52

##### Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-Houston	102	60	.630	-
Chicago Cubs	89	73	.549	13
St Louis	83	79	.512	19
Cincinnati	77	85	.475	25
Milwaukee	74	88	.457	28
Pittsburgh	69	93	.426	33

##### West Division

	W	L	Pct.	Gb
X-San Diego	98	64	.605	-
San Francisco	89	73	.549	9
Los Angeles	83	79	.512	15
Colorado	77	85	.475	21
Arizona	65	97	.401	33

X — Clinched Division Title

Note: Chicago Cubs to host San Francisco Monday night in one-game playoff for National League wild card berth

research lab scientists. McGwire, who has 10 multihomer games this year and 53 in his career, hit a go-ahead homer for the 24th time this season.

He opened the year with a slam on March 31 against the Dodgers' Ramon Martinez, then led the home run race all season except when Sosa twice passed him briefly — and then for only 103 minutes total.

The friendly competition between the two sluggers captivated fans for weeks, peaking the night McGwire broke Roger Maris' 37-year-old record with Sosa joining in the celebration.

Many believe their record-breaking feats — and their sportsmanship — helped rejuvenate a game that lost its luster four years ago when a strike wiped out the World Series.

San Diego's Greg Vaughn hit his 50th home run in his final game, making 1998 the first year four players reached the mark in a single season. He joined McGwire, Sosa and Seattle's Ken Griffey Jr. (56) in the 50-homer club.

Until this year, there had been just five seasons when a pair of players reached 50. McGwire figured into two of those: In 1996 when he hit 52 and last year when he hit 58.

Although Sunday was the Cardinals' final game of the season, the competition wasn't quite over.

Sosa, who did not homer Sunday, will get an extra game on Monday when the Cubs face the San Francisco Giants at Chicago's Wrigley Field in a one-game playoff for the wild-card spot — a game in which Sosa's stats will count.

"I wish him the best of luck, along with the Giants," McGwire said.

## Monica Seles mulls sacrifices needed for top form

TOKYO (AFP) — Monica Seles admits she must travel a "difficult road" if she is ever to sit at the top of the world rankings again and add to her nine Grand Slam singles titles.

Seles, speaking after powering past Arantxa Sanchez Vicario to win the \$450,000 Princess Cup tennis tournament for the third year running here Sunday said a return to the form she showed before she was stabbed in 1993 will involve huge sacrifices.

"For me, definitely I've got to work harder after my father passed away, because I lost a big part of my career with him, so that's one thing I'm trying this year to do something differently," said Seles, 24.

"But I do know also what I'm feeling...to get back to the position depends on how badly I want it, do I make all the sacrifice?"

"It's a tough life to be at that level, especially nowadays, because everybody wants that position even more," she added.

Her father and coach, Karolj, died in May.

Seles wrestled the No. 1 ranking from Steffi Graf of Germany for the first time in March 1991 at 17 years, three months, nine days, the youngest in history until Swiss teenager Martina Hingis rewrote history last year.

She had won the Australian Open and the French Open three times each and the U.S. Open twice when she was stabbed in the back during a change-over in Hamburg in May 1993, which forced her out of action for 28 months.

Seles was provided with a co-No. 1 ranking with Graf by the WTA Tour when she came back in August 1995 and won her fourth Australian Open the following year.

New U.S. Open champion Lindsay Davenport is threatening Hingis while Graf and another former World No. 1, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, are fighting hard to regain top spot.

Russian teenager sensation Anna Kournikova and American Williams sisters, Venus and Serena, are also expected to threaten them in the near future.

"I just have to practice and hit a lot of balls, because I do feel after not picking up a racket for two-and-a-half years at all, I've lost a lot of my consistency," said Seles.

"To do well in the Grand Slam, I have to improve a lot of things in the next few months, but it's always difficult, because even if you think you are playing your best tennis, all the other players have also worked hard to try to win it.

## 'China considers three cities for 2008 Olympics'

BEIJING (R) — China is considering rival bids by three of its largest cities — Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou — to host the 2008 Olympic Games, state media said on Monday.

Guangzhou's offer would be sweetened by the inclusion of Hong Kong and Macau, former European colonies on the southern coast, the Shenzhen Weekend quoted Wu Shaozu, chairman of China's Olympic Committee, as saying.

Xu Yisheng, vice-chairman of China's Olympic Committee, denied rumours that the commercial hub Shanghai had already been chosen as China's candidate, the China News Service said.

The other main Asian contender in the bidding is Osaka which has already submitted its application. Cape Town would be viewed by China as a strong contender because Africa has yet to host the Games, the newspaper said.

The deadline for applying to host the 2008 Games is February 2002.

China staked its national pride five years ago on winning the bidding war for the 2000 Olympics, briefly releasing several leading political prisoners.

But Beijing was bitterly disappointed when Sydney won the bid in what Chinese saw as anti-China political bias in the West.

China would learn from its better organised competitor (Sydney) in the bidding for 2008, the Shenzhen Weekend newspaper said.

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Swiss boxer Stefan Anghern, right, penetrates the defences of U.S. opponent Dan Ward during the IBF intercontinental cruiser weight fight in Kloten Switzerland. Anghern won the match (AP photo)

## Veteran Matthaus called up by Ribbeck

FRANKFURT (AFP) — German coach Erich Ribbeck picked record-breaking veteran Lothar Matthaus on Monday among 16 survivors from the Bert Vogts era for their opening Euro 2000 qualifiers.

Former Bayern Munich coach Ribbeck, who took over after the resignation of Vogts three weeks ago, has also picked eight Bayern players in his 26-strong squad for matches in Turkey on October 10 and in Moldova four days later.

The list will be reduced to about 20 in the days leading up to the matches.

Ribbeck called up 37-year-old Matthaus,

who has played in five World Cup finals and holds the world record of 25 appearances.

Matthaus had been out of the side for three and a half years following a quarrel with Vogts before earning a late call-up for France 98.

Keepers: Oliver Kahn (Bayern), Stefan Klos (Dortmund), Jens Lehmann (AC Milan), Defenders: Markus Babel (Bayern), Mustafa Dogan (Fenerbahce/Tur), Yves Egenrauch (Schalke), Lothar Matthaus (Bayern), Jens Nowotny (Leverkusen), Marko Rehmer

(Hansa Rostock), Midfielders: Mario Basler (Bayern), Stefan Beinlich (Leverkusen), Marco Bode (Bremen), Jorg Heinrich (Fiorentina), Jens Jeremies (Bayern), Christian Nerlinger (Dortmund), Carsten Ramelow (Leverkusen), Lars Ricken (Dortmund), Thomas Strunz (Bayern), Michael Tarnat (Bayern), Ralf Weber (Eintracht Frankfurt), Dariusz Wozniak (Hertha Berlin), Strikers: Oliver Bierhoff (AC Milan), Carsten Jancker (Bayern), Ulf Kirsten (Leverkusen), Olaf Marschall (Kaiserslautern), Oliver Neville (Hansa Rostock),

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TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Richard Yates Theatre
	Lawrence Fishburn & Andy Garcia .. in <b>HOODLUM</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John .. in <b>GREASE</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam .. in <b>AL Z'ATEEM</b> Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD '1' <b>NASSER</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' <b>UP CLOSE &amp; PERSONAL</b> Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria <b>ARMAGEDDON</b> Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Leonardo Di Caprio & Robert DeNiro .. in <b>MARVIN'S ROOM</b> Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Watch out for the new play



## Football Association Shield Kufrsoum beat Hussein 2-1 to force deciding match

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Kufrsoum Monday beat Al Hussein 2-1 to force a final deciding match in the 1998 Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield Championship.

Monday night's title match — the fourth of the Kingdom's annual soccer competitions — would have capped the event had Al Hussein won since they maintained an unbeaten record throughout the event.

Kufrsoum, on the other hand, had lost one match earlier in the competition, and therefore had to first beat Al Hussein to force a deciding match for the title.

The third teams will now meet again Wednesday to decide the winner.

Both surprise finalists eliminated top teams to reach the final. Record-holding teams like titleholders Al Faisali lost to both finalists; Al Wihdat lost to Al Qadissieh and Shabab Al

Hussein, while Al Ramtha also lost to Kufrsoum last week.

Al Hussein's only major title was the 1994 Shield in which they beat Al Faisali while Kufrsoum have never won any of the four major titles.

The team was promoted to the Premier League only three years ago and, unlike other newcomers who are usually demoted in a year's time, have maintained a constant form ever since.

The month-long event brought together Premier League teams only competing without their national team players for the first time in the tournament's history as the national team played in the Arab Cup in Qatar (see separate story on page 10).

Al Wihdat, Al Faisali and Al Ramtha, all of whom have won the Shield four times, were the three clubs most affected by the absence of their players

while the rest of the teams had their complete lineups ready for competition.

The JFA Shield is the last major soccer event of the season. There are two more weeks remaining for the conclusion of the first leg of Premier League which will resume Oct. 4.

Al Wihdat, looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title, won the first of the season's titles when they clinched their fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali beat Al Wihdat to win their record 10th Jordan Cup last month. They currently top Premier League standings on goal difference over Al Wihdat.

Al Faisali's last major titles were the 1995 Jordan Cup and the 1997 Federation Shield. Al Wihdat have won the Jordan Cup and Cup Winners' Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four.

## Hingis and Davenport out for big cash pay-out

MUNICH (R) — World No. 1 Martina Hingis and her most dangerous rival, Lindsay Davenport, will steal the show from the men as they hunt a huge cash pay-out in the Grand Slam Cup this week.

For the first time since its introduction in 1990, the lucrative event for the best performers in the season's four grand slams, starting on Tuesday, also features a women's competition, which looks much more attractive than the men's tournament.

Pete Sampras, Carlos Moya and Patrick Rafter, who triumphed at Wimbledon, the French Open and the U.S. Open respectively, have all decided not to come Munich, leaving Australian Open champion Petr Korda as the sole winner of a grand slam this year in the men's 12-strong draw.

All four Grand Slam champions will be in a star-studded women's draw featuring, not only Hingis and Davenport but also Wimbledon champion Jana Novotna and Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, who won her third title on the Paris clay last June.

Australian Open champion Hingis, who will celebrate her 18th birthday on Wednesday, looks forward to taking revenge on Davenport after losing to the American in the U.S. Open final earlier this month. The two who will clash only if they reach Sunday's final.

The highest-ranked player in the men's draw is Chilean Marcelo Rios, the World No. 3. But few expect him to shine as the super-quick synthetic surface of Munich's indoor hall does not suit his playing style.

It seems wiser to bet on hard-hitting Australian Mark Philippoussis, the U.S. Open losing finalist, or on Croatian Goran Ivanisevic, who relied on his trademark, booming serves to win here in 1995.

While in Munich, Philippoussis, appearing in the Grand Slam Cup for the first time, should receive a fax from Australia's Davis Cup captain John Newcombe, anxious to welcome him back in the team.

Australia beat Uzbekistan 5-0 in a World Group qualifying tie at the weekend without Philippoussis, who missed the tie after accusing Australian coach Tony Roche of showing bias towards Rafter by sitting with his entourage during the U.S. Open final.

In the absence of German idols Boris Becker and Steffi Graf, both nursing injuries, the crowd's favourite could well be showman Andre Agassi, who has had a frustrating grand slam season but was given a wild card.

The Grand Slam Cup has no influence on the world rankings as it does not grant points but there is more than prize at stake with a total \$6.7 million in prize money on offer.

The winner of the men's tournament will pocket \$1.3 million while the women's champion will have to be content with \$800,000.

The tournament, which will be staged in Munich again next year, faces an uncertain future. Criticised by many as a meaningless exhibition when it started, it still does not have the prestige of the ATP Tour world championship, which will be staged in November in Hanover.

Several top players and tennis officials have suggested that there should be only one end-of-season event, bringing together the best competitors in the grand slams and in the leading tournaments on the ATP Tour and WTA circuits.

## 9th Arabian Horse Show starts today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Once again, the legendary grace of the Arabian horse will be on display, as the Royal Stables at Hummar plays host to five countries in the 9th annual Arabian Horse Show.

The event is held under Royal patronage and will be opened by HRH Princess Alia, president of the Royal Jordanian Equestrian Federation, with 165 entries from Qatar, the UAE, Palestine and Syria competing with the host nation for the Middle East Championship, which will end Friday.

Last year, Jordan virtually swept the board, missing out on only one category, which was won by the UAE.

The Middle East Championship is not the only event, however. In a departure from the traditional programme, the popular flat races will be held



HRH Princess Alia at the Royal Stables (file photo)

which will culminate in Friday's final.

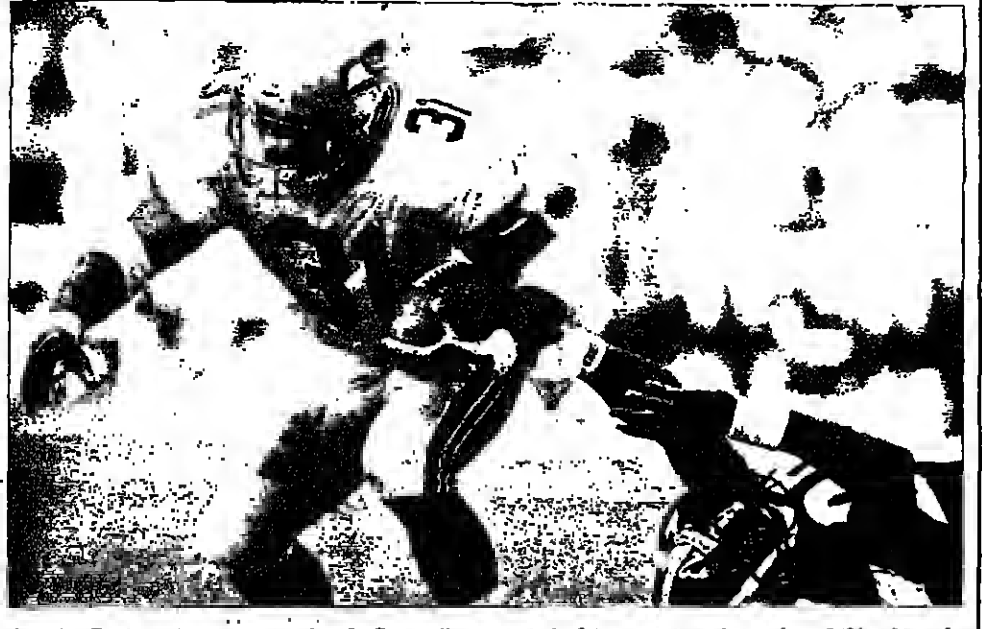
The horses are judged in five categories for the beauty show: type, head and neck, body and top-line, legs and endurance.

In order to make the horse show itself off to the best effect the role of the handler is crucial: if the neck is a bit short, the handler may try to overcome this by holding out a tuft of grass, so that the horse constantly cranes its neck, making it appear longer.

The job of the international panel of judges will be to see through this as much as possible before arriving at their judgement.

One notable absentee from this year's show, will be Jerash, four time winner, and last year's champion, a huge favourite with the spectators.

Jerash retired after last year's show, and it remains to be seen whether Jordan has another horse of its calibre.



Seattle Seahawks running back Steve Broussard (31) escapes the grip of Pittsburgh Steelers cornerback Jason Simmons (23) on a short run for a first down in the second quarter in Pittsburgh (Reuters photo)

## Results of National Football League

Green Bay	37	Carolina	30
Oakland	13	Dallas	12
New Orleans	19	Indianapolis	13 (OT)
Kansas City	24	Philadelphia	21
Arizona	20	St. Louis	17
Jacksonville	27	Tennessee	22
Denver	38	Washington	16
Pittsburgh	13	Seattle	10
Minnesota	31	Chicago	28
NY Giants	34	San Diego	16
San Francisco	31	Atlanta	20
Baltimore	31	Cincinnati	24

## Sydney Olympics to have waterproof flame for torch

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian scientists believe they have come up with an Olympic flame that will not go out, even if dropped into water, during the Sydney 2000 Games torch relay.

"The flame will work," Adelaide University's Gus Nathan said of the design his department is working on to beat problems the Nagano Winter Olympic organisers ran into in February when their flame kept going out.

Nathan said the designers also aimed to minimise the environmental impact of the gas-lit torch and keep it as cheap as possible while ensuring an attractive, bright flame that never went out.

"The same flame has to stay alight from Athens all the way to the opening ceremony, which includes a few aeroplane flights where it will be in a miner's lamp. There will be 10,000 changes where we have to make sure it doesn't go out," Dr Nathan said.

The scientists have used different combinations of fuels and tested the flame in wind tunnels and even in water tanks.

The shape and material of the torch is still a closely-guarded secret to be unveiled at a torch launch in January next year.

The relay will be run by ordinary Australians, starting 100 days before the opening ceremony, with each runner getting to keep the torch they carry as a souvenir.



Zaragoza Brazilian Paulo Roberto Jamelli (C) vies with David Billabona (R) of Racing de Santander in a Liga match. Zaragoza won 2-1 (AFP photo)

## Sweden and Italy complete one-sided Davis Cup wins

PARIS (AFP) — Spain and the United States managed to stave off total humiliation Sunday by winning one of the final singles as defending champions Sweden and Italy advanced to their Davis Cup final showdown from December 4 with 4-1 victories.

Julian Alonso, ranked 63rd and better known as Martina Hingis' boyfriend, scored Spain's only win in Stockholm.

He defeated Thomas Johansson 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) in the first of the 'dead' rubbers after being sent into battle in place of Alex Corretja by Spanish coach Manuel Santana.

Sweden's 26-year-old number-one Jonas Bjorkman then outplayed jaded French Open champion Carlos Moya 6-3, 7-5 and declared: "I'd love the chance to win the Davis Cup for the third time. I'm looking forward to the final."

The home captain Carl Axel Hageskog said that teamwork had been the basis of the Swedish success.

"I'm very pleased and

proud," he said, adding: "The players did a fantastic job to win four of five tough matches."

Sweden, who will be playing in the final for a twelfth time, were champions in 1975, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1994 and 1997.

The Swedish approach to their semi-final against Spain contrasted with the American attitude.

The United States had to field an understrength team against Italy in Milwaukee when their top players Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and Michael Chang all made themselves 'unavailable' for the match. And they paid the price.

It was left to Jan-Michael Gambill to salvage the only American success on the final day. He beat Davide Sanguineti 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 in the final of the rubbers — although the Italian clearly had trouble getting motivated after his first-day victory over Todd Martin.

Gianluca Pozzi earlier made it 4-0 to the Italians when he defeated Justin Gimelstob 7-6 (7/4), 7-5.

Italy, whose only victory in the competition came in

1976, have been runners-up five times. They lost to Sweden in the semi-finals last year.

In the qualifying matches, Britain returned to the top-flight when they completed a 3-2 victory over India at Nottingham.

Tim Henman secured the winning point when he beat Leander Paes 7-6 (7/3), 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) to give Britain a 3-1 lead but Mahesh Bhupathi pulled one back in the final singles by defeating Greg Rusedski's stand-in Chris Wilkinson 6-3, 6-4.

"It's great for Britain to be back in the World Group and it will give us a great opportunity to play some really exciting ties in the future," said Henman after the win.

Britain have been out of the 16-nation World Group since 1992 and their last success in the event came in 1936.

United States Open champion Patrick Rafter and Jason Stoltenberg breezed through the reverse singles to hand Australia a 5-0 clean sweep over Uzbekistan in Townsville.

With the tie already safely

won on Saturday, Rafter cruised past Dmitri Tomashevich 6-2, 6-4 and Stoltenberg disposed of Oleg Ogorodov 6-3, 6-3.

Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde had wrapped up Australia's victory 24 hours earlier with a 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/4) win over Uzbek pair Ogorodov and Tomashevich.

In other qualifying matches, Russia finally beat Japan 3-1 in Osaka — the final 'dead' rubber singles being abandoned because of rain — while in Prague the Czech Republic were 5-0 winners over South Africa.

Netherlands also won all their matches against Ecuador in Eindhoven and France ended up with a 4-1 win over Israel in their last match with Yannick Noah as captain — Cedric Pioline being beaten in the first of the reverse singles by Harel Levi before Nicolas Escude saw off Amir Hadad.

Argentina were leading 2-1 against the Slovak Republic in Buenos Aires before rain forced the final singles to be postponed until Monday.

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## Aziz meets with Annan over U.N. inspection stalemate

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

Secretary-General Kofi Annan met Monday with Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz to discuss the 7-week-old stalemate with Baghdad over arms inspections and the U.N. chief's proposal to break the logjam.

The Iraqi delegation made no comment to reporters as they headed into Annan's office at U.N. headquarters.

Aziz was leading a team that included the foreign minister, Said Al-Sahaf, the oil minister Amer Mohammed Rashid, the deputy foreign minister, Riyadh Al Qaisi, and a top adviser to President Saddam Hussein, Lt. Gen. Amer Al Saadi.

The two sides were expected to discuss Annan's ideas for a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with U.N. resolutions demanding it destroy its weapons of mass destruction.

The Security Council asked Annan to formulate such a proposal earlier this month, hoping that Iraq would back down from the standoff knowing that a comprehensive review could highlight Iraq's seven years of work to destroy its banned weapons.

The council stressed that no such review would take place until Iraq rescinds its Aug. 5 decision to stop cooperating with U.N. inspectors.

Aziz, however, was instructed to insist that the United Nations take the first step in ending the stalemate, Iraq's vice president, Taha Yassin Ramadan, said in a statement carried Friday by the official Al Iraq newspaper.

U.N. arms experts must report that Iraq has destroyed its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons — and the long-range missiles to deliver them — before the council will lift sanctions imposed

after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Iraq stopped cooperating with inspectors after the chief U.N. weapons inspector, Richard Butler, refused to certify that it had destroyed its banned weapons.

Monday's meeting comes as chemical weapons experts have been meeting at U.N. headquarters to discuss the findings of Swiss and French laboratories testing missile fragments for suspected traces of the deadly VX gas.

Preliminary results from the European labs have been inconclusive, diplomats have said.

A U.S. Army lab reported finding traces of the gas in June but Baghdad disputed the findings.

Butler agreed to send other samples to European labs, though he has said Saddam Hussein still must answer for the positive U.S. tests.

## Iraqi Kurdish group rejects truce offer by PKK

ANKARA (AP) — An Iraqi Kurdish group turned down a unilateral cease-fire declared by rival Turkish Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, the Iraqi group said Monday.

The truce was declared Sunday by the Turkish Kurdish guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, the German-based Kurdish news agency DEM said.

"We have nothing to talk to them about," said Faik Nerwey, a spokesman for

the Iraqi group, the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

"We don't want them in northern Iraq at all." The cease-fire comes two weeks after an agreement was signed between Democratic Party and its Iraqi Kurdish rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, for a joint administration of the de facto autonomous Kurdish zone in northern Iraq.

The groups committed themselves to fighting the PKK in a move to appease

Turkey. The PKK has been fighting for autonomy within Turkey and uses northern Iraq as a base to launch attacks.

The cease-fire announcement was apparently a political manoeuvre by the PKK to maintain its presence in northern Iraq, where it is greatly outnumbered by the Iraqi Kurdish forces.

The war between Turkish troops and Turkish Kurdish rebels has killed some 37,000 people since 1984.

## Islamist organisation accuses Rushdie of reigniting hatred

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's Muslim "parliament," a non-elected pro-Islamic body based in London, Monday accused British author Salman Rushdie of reigniting a wave of hatred among the Muslim community.

Rushdie had lost an "historic opportunity" last week after Iran distanced itself from the 1989 fatwa sentencing him to death for alleged blasphemy in his book "The Satanic Verses," the parliament's leader said in a statement.

By refusing to apologise for hurting the feelings of Muslims worldwide or with-

draw the book, Rushdie is "simply reigniting the whole conflict and is bent on continuing a life of hell," Ghayassuddin Siddiqui said.

At a press conference on Friday, Rushdie had struck a defiant tone, refusing to offer any apologies and saying there wasn't a "chance of hell" that after enduring 10 years as a hunted man he would now withdraw the book.

The organisation underlined that Iran had not withdrawn the fatwa, because it was not in its power to reverse a religious decree, and that the \$2.5 million bounty placed on Rushdie's head by an Iranian

religious foundation still stood.

Tehran and London last week announced after a meeting of their foreign ministers in New York that Iran was dissociating itself from the bounty.

This paved the way for Britain to agree to restore full diplomatic relations with the Islamic republic.

But Sunday Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi reaffirmed the irrevocability of the fatwa and accused Rushdie of continuing to adopt an "offensive" stance and that this was fuelling Muslims' hatred towards him.

## Iran bans moderate daily

TEHRAN (R) — Iran on Monday officially banned a major opposition newspaper for insulting the late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

"The press supervisory board... unanimously revoked the licence of the *Tous* newspaper and handed over its case to the press court," the agency said.

The move formalised the closure of the outspoken daily, which was shut earlier this month by an Islamic revolutionary court which also ordered the arrest of several of its staff on unspecified charges of acting against Iran's security.

The press board ruled that *Tous* had insulted Ayatollah Khomeini by publishing an interview with former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, in which he said Khomeini had sought political

asylum in France after arriving in Paris before the 1979 Islamic revolution, IRNA said.

Newspapers have said police have detained four senior *Tous* journalists — Masallah Shamsolvaezin, Hamid Reza Jalaeipour, Ibrahim Nabavi and Mohammad Sadeq Javadi-Hesar.

*Tous*, which often criticised the conservatives, had gained wide circulation by testing the limits of wider Iranian press freedom introduced by President Mohammad Khatami.

The closing of *Tous*, and the reported suspension of two moderate weeklies, came shortly after Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on officials to take action against newspapers which he accused of "abusing freedom of speech to weaken the people's Islamic beliefs."

The moves against the moderate publications have

sparked a row, with conservatives calling for more decisive action and several moderate groups and newspapers denouncing the measures as illegal.

Conservatives have attacked the more outspoken moderate newspapers as threats to national security and a senior Islamic judge warned that the jailed *Tous* journalists could face the death penalty as "mohareb," or "those who fight God."

Some of Khatami's moderate backers have expressed concern that powerful conservative opponents might take advantage of the face-off with the Afghan Taliban to move against some newly granted liberties.

Khatami's government, which came to power last year, has granted unprecedented press freedom and licensed dozens of new publications. It has relaxed censorship on books and films.

## Kuwaiti journalist referred to constitutional court

KUWAIT (AP) — An appeals court on Monday passed to a higher court a constitutional argument raised by lawyers for a Kuwaiti editor sentenced to prison for publishing a joke deemed insulting to Islam.

The attorneys for Mohammad Al Saqar, editor of the independent daily *Al Qabas*, claim that the 1961 publications law under which he was convicted contradicts the constitution. They asked that the question be turned

over to the constitutional court.

That court is expected to offer advice on the constitutional issue to the appeals court, which in turn will uphold or overturn the June 24 ruling of the court of first instance.

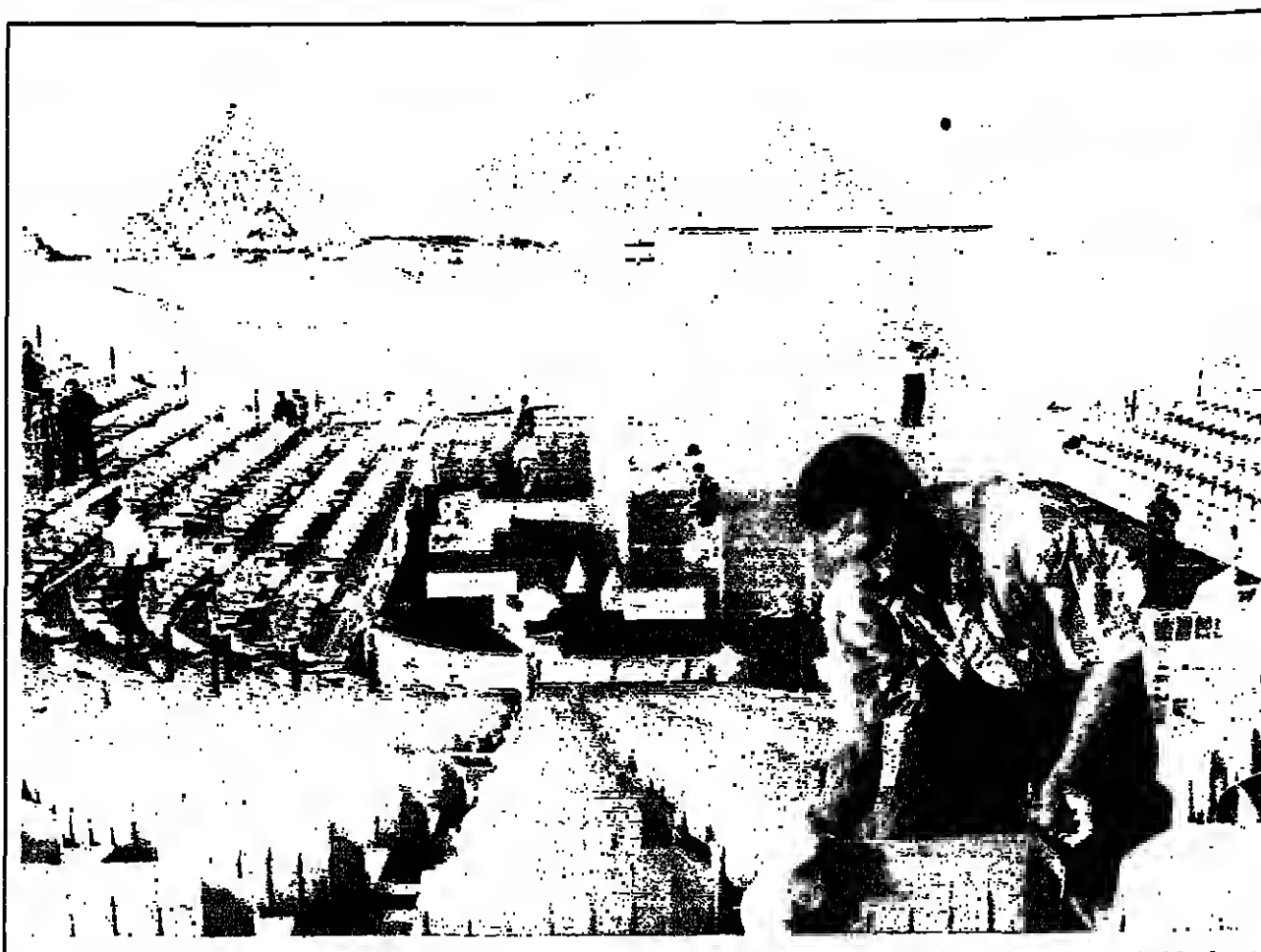
Al Saqar was taken to court by Kuwait's information ministry after Islamist lawmakers objected to the joke in *Al Qabas*.

In the joke, a teacher asks his students: "Why did God

kick Adam and Eve out of heaven?" A student answers: "Because they hadn't paid the rent."

The six months in jail punishment was the first of its kind in this small oil-rich state that boasts the freest press in a Gulf Arab country.

The publications law stipulates that an editor-in-chief is responsible for everything published in the newspaper, but the 1992 constitution says individuals cannot be penalised for the wrongdoing of others.



SQUASH BY THE PYRAMIDS: An Egyptian worker cleans the chairs of an open air squash court installed in front of the Giza Pyramids on Sunday on the occasion of the International Al-Ahram Squash Championships (AFP photo)

## Jewish settlers dispatch envoys to influence Netanyahu

### Settler injured by bullet in Hebron enclave

TEL AVIV (R) — Two Jewish settler leaders flew to the United States on Monday to try to stop Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from closing any deal that would give Palestinians more West Bank land.

In divided Hebron in the West Bank, an Israeli woman was slightly wounded by shots fired from the Palestinian-ruled side of the city. Settlers said the attack showed Israel could not trust Palestinians.

Settlers dispatched the two leaders as news emerged from New York that Netanyahu had met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat for the first time in nearly a year and that the two men would join U.S. President Bill Clinton at a White House summit.

"The situation is critical and so we asked our senior soldiers...to pack their suitcases quickly and fly to New York to speak to Netanyahu," Aharon Domb, director-general of the Jewish settlers council, told Israel Radio.

The United States is trying to forge a deal under which Israel would hand over 13 per cent more of the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority in return for a crackdown on Islamists.

Settler spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar said two West Bank mayors, Uri Ariel of Beit Al and Benny Kashriel of Maale Adumim, were sent to New York "to strengthen Mr. Netanyahu, who is receiving pressure, negative pressure, from all sides."

Settler council head Pinhas Wallerstein hinted Clinton's high profile in negotiations was intended to deflect attention from the fallout of the Monica Lewinsky sex-and-lies affair in the United States.

"It's clear here who has to pay the price of the Lewinsky affair," he told Israel Radio.

Israel's army said the woman was injured near a settler enclave in Hebron by shots fired from a part of the city under Palestinian security control. Israel Radio said the woman, aged around 40, from Herzliya near Tel Aviv, was hurt in the leg.

Domb said whoever was behind the attack would likely flee to a nearby Palestinian-controlled area.

"Whoever knows Hebron knows that as in other places, there is a procedure — they come, they open fire at Jews and flee to the cities of refuge," Domb said.

Witnesses said following the attack some 20 settlers stormed a Palestinian vegetable market throwing cartons of produce to the ground and pushing Palestinian merchants.

Like Israel carried out against an Iraqi nuclear site in 1981.

"When Prime Minister Menachem Begin attacked the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, he didn't talk about it, he did it," Landau told Israel Radio.

Landau argued that Iran's military programme today was designed above all to counter perceived threats in the Gulf region and not to target Israel.

"Talk about pre-emptive strikes is the best way to heighten the likelihood of Israel being seen as a threat," he said.

Israeli television added to the debate Friday by reporting that the first squadron of Israeli F-15I fighter planes, delivered by the United States at the start of 1998 and capable of attacking Iran or Iraq, are now operational.

## Taleban seek recognition two years after takeover

KABUL (R) — The Taleban on Monday demanded recognition as the government of Afghanistan, two years after the movement seized power in Kabul and embarked on a mission to create the world's purest Islamic state.

"We call for recognition by the international community which is something we deserve and the world knows this," Taleban spokesman Abdul Hai Mutmean told Reuters.

The U.N. envoy for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, is expected to hear similar calls when he embarks on a mission next month to defuse tension between the Taleban and Iran, which backs the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani that the Taleban ousted.

Only Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan recognise the Taleban government. The U.N. seat is held by Rabbani and the U.N. wants to see a broad based government to

end 20 years of ethnic and factional bloodshed.

The Taleban, whose Islamist drive has set it on a collision course with aid organisations and some Western governments, now controls around 95 per cent of the country after seizing two key opposition strongholds in the north and centre of the state.

"We do not know what sort of credential the ousted Rabbani government has outside Afghanistan that he is still considered as president," Mutmean said.

The ousted government has suffered setbacks at the hands of the Taleban, whose fighters captured Mazar-e-Sharif in the north of the country, and the central town of Bamayan from Iranian-backed opposition factions.

The victories have been decided by Teheran, which has sent hundreds of thousands of troops to its borders with Afghanistan in a show of

strength over the killing of nine Iranian diplomats by renegade Taleban who overran Mazar-e-Sharif.

Mutmean said the Taleban wanted to know why the United Nations insisted on withholding recognition.

"They make these outcries of human rights on and off...What we are doing is Islamic ordinance which should be respected, but what Rabbani does is neither Islamic and nor based on international laws. They [the U.N.] should come forward with reasons that they call him president," he said.

The Taleban say they have brought peace and security to areas under their control after years of anarchy, and dismiss charges that they ignore human rights, especially those of women, as a Western misunderstanding of Islam.

But their record of denying women of education and jobs is a major reason that Western crit-

ics, such as U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, has accused them of "gender apartheid."

Mutmean said women's rights were grossly abused in the bloodshed and chaos that preceded the Taleban takeover but insisted that they now had full rights under Islamic law.

"When women are not safe to venture out of their houses, people can't live peacefully because of fear of armed groups."

But where the basic rules of a society are not upheld [under Rabbani], they call that a government," Mutmean said.

Brahimi is expected to fly to Iran first before shutting between Afghanistan and Pakistan, which is accused by Iran of arming and supplying the Taleban, a charge both deny.

He may call for a new round of peace talks, after an earlier round this year between the opposition alliance and the Taleban broke down.

## Column

### New Kate Winslet film upsets Indian Hindus

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Titanic star Kate Winslet's new film, "Holy Smoke," shot on a location in India, is facing its own potential iceberg in the form of irate Hindu priests. Priests in the northern city of Pushkar have strongly objected to the use of an ancient temple for filming, saying the camera crews were flouting strict rules on behaviour and clothing. According to the Purahit Sangh, a grouping representing Hindu priests, foreigners were not even allowed to enter the Bajji temple, where the shooting took place.

### 'Beauty comes from within'

LONDON (AFP) — A thin, blonde, leather-clad model, her two legs amputated at the hips, strutted down the catwalk to open Givenchy designer Alexander McQueen's Spring-Summer 1999 show during London's Fashion Week. Double-amputee Aimee Mullins, 22, opened the show in a huge warehouse that used to be a garbage depot, wearing specially-made leather boots on her artificial legs and a black leather corset on top. Mullins, whose legs were amputated when she was only one year old, participated in the 1996 Special Olympics in Atlanta and holds world records for long jump and the 100- and 200-metre dash. McQueen claims he did not choose Mullins as a "provocation." "I suppose that the idea is to show that beauty comes from within,"

### Cardin buys Geneva nightclub

GENEVA (R) — French couturier Pierre Cardin, owner of the world famous Paris restaurant Maxim's, has bought a Geneva nightclub of the same name, newspapers in the Swiss city reported. The daily Tribune de Geneve said the club — Maxim's Music Hall near Geneva's red light district — would undergo major refurbishment and reopen next year as an up-market restaurant on a level with the French Maxim's. Cardin, who has also opened establishments under the famous name in Beijing, Monte Carlo and New York, recently bought an apartment in Geneva not far from the local Maxim's — which was converted into a nightclub in 1996.

### Collins records songs in 4 languages

GENEVA (R) — British rock star Phil Collins has recorded songs in four languages for a new cartoon film for the U.S. Walt Disney studios, the Geneva newspaper InfoDimanche reported. It said Collins, who lives in western Switzerland, had completed recording for the film "Tarzan," in English, French, German and Spanish at studios in Geneva last week. Collins sings the theme for the film "The Song of Tarzan," as well as other songs. The film is due to be released in late December for the Christmas holidays.

### Cousteau's widow and son snipe at each other

NEW YORK (AP) — More than a year after Jacques Cousteau's death, the underwater explorer's widow and son reportedly are sniping at each other over how to carry on his work. "I represent continuity of the name," Cousteau's 60-year-old son, Jean-Michel, said in the latest issue of Time magazine. "So I must be a voice for the oceans." But Cousteau chose his widow, Francine Cousteau, to head the Cousteau Society, which holds the rights to his films, books and inventions. She plans to build the 217-foot Calypso II to replace Cousteau's beloved Calypso, which sank near Singapore in 1996. Jean-Michel Cousteau calls the Calypso II "a joke," and says "my father must be flip-flopping in his grave."

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